

Sentence Fragments

- Sentence fragments are sentences missing a subject, a verb, or follow-up information.
- Every sentence **must** at least have one **subject** and one corresponding **verb** to be considered complete. (Ex: "He bakes." "She runs." "They dance." "We travel.")

Explanation

- Writers must complete all the ideas that they have started in a sentence.
- Many words imply that further explanation will follow a subject and verb, especially coordinating conjunctions, transitions, and those that indicate time, contradiction, and additive information.

Identifying

- Sentences **must** follow through on any information they indicate and use *both* a subject and a verb. In addition, they must stand on their own grammatically even without context.
- First, writers should read each sentence aloud so that they can hear if it is complete or not.
- Next, writers should identify what part of the sentence is incomplete. Then, they can decide whether to add or subtract information.
- Writers should be mindful of coordinating conjunctions, transitional words, and any other language that makes a thought incomplete throughout the revision process.

Revision

- Oftentimes, the punctuation is incorrect, the sentence lacks a subject or verb, or loose ends need to be **removed**, **clarified**, **rearranged**, or **separated** into another sentences entirely. For example,

"She ran toward the field, which was freshly cut. Then to the other players."

"Then to the other players" is a fragment because it lacks a **subject** and **verb**.

- **Remove:** A writer could remove "which was freshly cut" to make the sentence complete: "*She ran toward the field and then to the other players.*"
- **Clarify:** A writer could make "which was freshly cut" a nonessential phrase: "*She ran toward the field, which was freshly cut, and then to the other players.*"
- **Rearrange:** A writer could move the information around so that "she ran" is the subject and verb of the sentence: "*She ran toward the freshly-cut field and then to the other players.*"
- **Separate:** A writer could separate each thought and add a subject and verb to both: "*She ran toward the field, which was freshly cut. Then, she ran to the other players.*"

Other examples of fragments:

- ❖ While the student studied.
 - What happened while he or she studied? The "while" indicates that the sentence will address the occurrence of another event. Here, the writer should either remove "Even though" or clarify what happened afterwards.
- ❖ Even though he cleaned up his mess.
 - "Even though" indicates that contradictory information will follow. Here, the writer should either remove "Even though" or clarify what happened afterwards.
- ❖ Yes. No. Of course. Not so.
 - Single word answers work in dialogue, but they are not acceptable in academic writing because they lack subjects and verbs and fail to convey concrete information.