

Sentence Fragments and Run-on Sentences

A sentence is a group of words that names something and makes a statement about what is named.

A sentence fragment is an incomplete sentence because it lacks a subject, lacks a verb, or is a dependent clause. Fragments usually begin with a subordinate conjunction or a relative pronoun. When sentences begin with subordinate conjunctions or relative pronouns, they must be joined to a main clause.

Fragments

Although he wanted to go to the meeting.
Whoever goes to the meeting.

Complete sentences

Although he wanted to go to the meeting, his doctor advised him to stay home.

Whoever goes to the meeting should bring back handouts for the rest of the group.

Subordinate Conjunctions: after, although, as, as if, as though, because, before, except, if, since, though, unless, until, when, whereas

Relative Pronouns: that, what, whatever, which, who, whoever, whom, whose

Run-on sentences usually occur as comma splices or fused sentences. A fused sentence occurs when independent clauses are joined with no punctuation. A comma splice occurs when only a comma joins two independent clauses.

An independent clause is a sentence. It can stand alone and make sense. A dependent clause is a fragment. It cannot stand alone and make sense.

Sentence Fragment Practice

Place a (✓) in the left hand column if the sentence is actually a fragment.

- ___ 1. While they were gone to the grocery store.
- ___ 2. Going to Florida and to Jamaica for Spring Break.
- ___ 3. Before the children have to go to bed.
- ___ 4. They are beautiful.
- ___ 5. Three of us went on the retreat.
- ___ 6. Because she had gone to her friend's house late at night without asking for permission.
- ___ 7. She won't eat them.
- ___ 8. I don't know when she's coming back.
- ___ 9. Since they left early in the morning.

- ___ 10. Mike doesn't know.
- ___ 11. Don't go into that room alone.
- ___ 12. After you return from the store.
- ___ 13. Because education is important.
- ___ 14. We are leaving at 3:00.
- ___ 15. Since she was dressed in white.
- ___ 16. While he is planning to be in Europe for the summer.
- ___ 17. There is nobody to help her.
- ___ 18. They are running four miles every morning.
- ___ 19. The importance of eating a healthy diet.
- ___ 20. When they arrive tomorrow.

Run-on Sentence Practice

Correct the following run-on sentences by dividing them into two complete sentences. Add a period to the end of the first sentence, and capitalize the first letter in the second sentence.

She wanted to go to the movie she called to find out what time the show started.
Corrected: She wanted to go to the movie. She called to find out what time the show started.

1. The red car is in the parking lot I don't know where the van and the motorcycle are.
2. She was the best student in the class all the study groups invited her to participate.
3. She found the house once she didn't think she could find it again.
4. There are four possible routes I don't know which is the best.
5. He wanted to meet the group at the restaurant he called to find out what time to arrive.
6. There weren't enough copies to go around we had to share the copies that were available.
7. You finished your work early you don't have to stay.
8. She didn't want to miss her meeting she made sure she left early.
9. They were in a desperate situation they didn't know what to do.
10. The children wanted to go fishing they gathered the supplies they needed.
11. She wanted to leave right after the ceremony too many people were around.
12. She sang as loudly as she could everybody heard her.
13. There was complete silence around me I still couldn't fall asleep.

14. She wanted to know her final grade she was the first one waiting for the grades to be posted.
15. The cat finally fell asleep the mouse ran through the room.
16. The player attempted a final shot he won the game for the team.
17. She didn't want to go she had no choice.
18. He had written down his assignment he couldn't remember where he put that piece of paper.
19. I was too sick to go I called and cancelled the plans.
20. I might have gone later in the day before dawn was just too early.

Run-on Sentence Practice

Correct the following run-on sentences by using a semicolon. Semicolons may be used to join independent clauses not joined by coordinating conjunctions.

She wanted to go to the movie she called to find out what time the show started.

Corrected: She wanted to go to the movie; she called to find out what time the show started.

1. The red car is in the parking lot I don't know where the van and the motorcycle are.
2. She was the best student in the class all the study groups invited her to participate.
3. She found the house once she didn't think she could find it again.
4. There are four possible routes I don't know which is the best.
5. He wanted to meet the group at the restaurant he called to find out what time to arrive.
6. There weren't enough copies to go around we had to share the copies that were available.
7. You finished your work early you don't have to stay.
8. She didn't want to miss her meeting she made sure she left early.
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15. The cat finally fell asleep the mouse ran through the room.
16. The player attempted a final shot he won the game for the team.
17. She didn't want to go she had no choice.
18. He had written down his assignment he couldn't remember where he put that piece of paper.
19. I was too sick to go I called and cancelled the plans.
20. I might have gone later in the day before dawn was just too early.

Run-on Sentence Practice

Correct the following run on sentences by using an appropriate coordinating conjunction and a comma. The coordinating conjunctions are *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so* (FANBOYS).

She wanted to go to the movie she called to find out what time the show started.

Corrected: She wanted to go to the movie, so she called to find out what time the show started.

1. The red car is in the parking lot I don't know where the van and the motorcycle are.
2. She was the best student in the class all the study groups invited her to participate.
3. She found the house once she didn't think she could find it again.
4. There are four possible routes I don't know which is the best.
5. He wanted to meet the group at the restaurant he called to find out what time to arrive.
6. There weren't enough copies to go around we had to share the copies that were available.
7. You finished your work early you don't have to stay.
8. She didn't want to miss her meeting she made sure she left early.
9. They were in a desperate situation they didn't know what to do.
10. The children wanted to go fishing they gathered the supplies they needed.
11. She wanted to leave right after the ceremony too many people were around.
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Sentence Fragments and Run-on Sentence Practice

Select the sentence from each group that is a sentence fragment or a run-on sentence.

- Probably two to three hours, depending on how hard the task is.
 - The test seemed impossible, but I managed to make an A.
 - We went shopping this past weekend.
 - He wanted the blue one.
- When you use the conjunctions and, for, nor, but, or, for, or, yet, so.
 - They promised to be there in time for the reception, but I expect they will be late.
 - There were four in our group.
 - Let's meet at Lucy's house, and remember to bring the soft drinks and popcorn.
- Mr. Smith, along with all of his students, took his place in the auditorium.
 - The girls arrived late and left early; they only intended to make a brief appearance.
 - It is important to spend time studying, however, rest and recreation are also important.
 - The prosecution presented its case so well that it would be a surprise for the jury to return a verdict of not guilty.
- This position requires speaking, writing, and supervising skills.
 - The conversation took place in her office, which was cluttered with papers and books.
 - The activity is brisk in the living room and in the kitchen while people are searching for a place to sit.
 - This is not what I requested the color is too dark, and it's the wrong size.
- After searching through a loose-leaf binder of old homework assignments, he finally found the notes he was searching for, and he began his intense study marathon.
 - The student entered the professor's office cautiously, and he wondered if the professor--especially someone so distinguished as to be the department head--could have any understanding of the stress students face.
 - Then she would be calm.
 - She looked at the cat again, who had been watching her, and the bird, which was chirping outside the window.
- He took the elevator up to the ninth floor; he was just in time for his appointment.
 - She waited a minute before dialing the phone, still wondering if she was making the right decision.
 - The child's mother looked at him disapprovingly; he was wet, and his new clothes were covered in mud.
 - Because there was a policy that only students of the school could check out books from the library.

7.
 - A. Jane watched for a moment, and then went back to work.
 - B. The teacher, having prepared the class for their exam.
 - C. She stood up and put on her jacket and hat.
 - D. Mary, sitting on the edge of her chair, watched to see the champion baton twirler's fire and knife performance.

8.
 - A. He looked old; his hair and beard were gray.
 - B. Because the only one in the room besides her was an old gentleman with a fragile hand placed on each knee, whose eyes were closed as if he were asleep or dead or meditating.
 - C. Next to the young girl was the boy, still sleeping in the chair, and next to him was an older man, constantly watching the clock.
 - D. I like the way Judge Smith runs the courtroom; she has no trouble keeping order.

9.
 - A. His teaching position paid well; nevertheless, his graduate school tuition was a great financial strain.
 - B. Please don't ask me to read I didn't bring my glasses.
 - C. We sang until midnight.
 - D. She had the correct answer.

10.
 - A. Not wanting to appear overly ambitious.
 - B. Learning to play a musical instrument takes a great deal of time and patience.
 - C. All of the books on the list appealed to him, but he knew he would only have time to read two during the trip.
 - D. This is an important presentation for anyone interested in the field.