

IDENTIFYING AND CORRECTING FRAGMENTS

A sentence fragment is an incomplete sentence.

A sentence must contain at least one independent clause. An independent clause is a complete sentence and can stand on its own.

Examples (the independent clause is underlined):

I go to the store.

When school is over for the day, the students go home.

Sonia, who is twelve years old, has been hired for her first babysitting job.

The children go out to play when it is a nice day.

I enjoy all ice cream; however, strawberry is my favourite.

You love him, and he loves you.

If a sentence does not contain an independent clause, it is not a complete sentence, but a fragment.

There are two kinds of sentence fragments.

1) The first type of sentence fragment is missing either a subject or verb, or in some cases, both a subject and a verb.

This type of fragment can be corrected in several ways: a subject and/or verb may be added to the beginning of the sentence, or an independent clause may be added after a comma to make a complete sentence.

Examples:

Incorrect:

Assuming that he is single.

On the way to the store.

Correct:

I am assuming that he is single.

On the way to the store, *they met their aunt.*

2) The second type of sentence fragment is a dependent clause. It contains a subject and a verb, but it also contains a dependent word.

This type of fragment can be corrected by adding an independent clause.



Examples:

Incorrect

When I go to the store.

The young boy *who* grew three inches in one year.

Correct

When I go to the store, I buy milk.

The young boy, *who* grew three inches in one year, became quite awkward.

Exercise 1

Identify whether the following sentences are correct (c) or fragments (f). Then, correct the fragments.

- _____ 1. Although he wanted to have more friends.
- _____ 2. Young people enjoy going to the movies.
- _____ 3. It was the best night of her life.
- _____ 4. Yellow being their school's colour.
- _____ 5. Hank is the most popular student in Balmoral Secondary School.
- _____ 6. Joseph flying a kite at the park.
- _____ 7. When choosing courses for the next semester.
- _____ 8. People jumping for joy screaming "Hooray!"

Exercise 2

Identify whether the following sentences are correct (c) or fragments (f). Then, correct the fragments.

- _____ 1. In today's society, people often choose computer-oriented careers. Such as programming and web designing.
- _____ 2. The teaching profession is often frustrating. Some say it is not worth the effort.
- _____ 3. Good manners are important in all cases. Whether a person is in a good mood or not.
- _____ 4. When I go outside. I love to run in the long grass.



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- _____ 5. Students serving students. This is a slogan which could be applied to peer tutoring services at Humber College.
- _____ 6. Love makes the world go round. Is love enough?
- _____ 7. The clown made the nasty, old woman laugh. Which is not an easy thing to do.
- _____ 8. When growing up in Canada, children have the same rights as adults. Unlike children in many other countries who are forced into slavery and mistreated by elders.

Exercise 3

Find the fragments in the following paragraphs, and then correct them.

1. Many people love to dance the rumba while few enjoy the tango. These dances are both taught at Buba's School of Dance. Which is located on the corner of Holmes and Tree Streets in downtown Morville. The tango is predicted to make a comeback in the coming year.
2. Young adults are moving away from home at an alarming rate. Even though they don't have enough money to pay rent and are forced by their poverty to apply for welfare. Most of these young adults end up in dead end jobs because they had to drop out of school. Because they want their so-called "freedom," these young adults are becoming a drain on society.
3. Growing a garden requires a great deal of diligence on the part of the gardener. There are many things to be done to ensure the garden's success. Chores such as watering, weeding, and fertilizing. If a gardener does all these things, the garden will be a success.
4. Truck drivers must obtain a special licence before they are able to carry large loads. This is not arguable. Although they may not have to go to classes to be trained for these and can often get away without being properly qualified to carry heavy loads. The government needs to create a program that will establish standards for all Canadian and international truck drivers.



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5. Prozac is the wonder drug of the '90s. Many depressed people who take this drug in order to concentrate and relieve their anxiety. Even though Prozac helps many, it is reportedly overused and over-prescribed. People should get a second opinion before taking Prozac.

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