



Well-Phrased Sentences

A sentence is a group of words that has at least one independent clause (a clause that has a subject and a corresponding verb).

Common Problems

The Run-on Sentence

The run-on sentence is also called a fused sentence. It is an instance where there is incorrect or no punctuation between independent clauses (complete sentences).

Example: *It was cold I put on a sweater.*

Solution: A run-on sentence can be fixed using one or more of the following techniques:

- a) Splitting it up into two or more sentences.
It was cold. I put on a sweater.
- b) Separating it into two independent clauses using a semicolon.
It was cold; I put on a sweater.
- c) Punctuating the sentence using a comma and a conjunction such as *and, but, for, nor, yet, or, and so*.
It was cold, so I put on a sweater.

The Comma Splice

A comma splice consists of independent clauses (complete sentences) separated only by a comma.

Example: *It was cold, I put on a sweater.*

Solution: A comma splice is fixed by using the same techniques you use to fix a run-on sentence.

The Sentence Fragment

A sentence fragment is a group of words that is punctuated like a sentence but does not have the required subject and verb, or is a dependent (as opposed to independent) clause.

A sentence fragment can be fixed using one of two techniques.

- a) If the fragment is meant to be an independent clause, check to see whether the subject or verb is missing. Add whichever is needed to complete the sentence.
- b) If the fragment is a dependent clause, then link it, using a comma, to whichever sentence the dependent clause refers.

Example: *Because I have loved to listen to my favourite music, jazz and classical, for many years.*

Solution: *I am going to the concert because I have loved to listen to my favourite music, jazz and classical, for many years.*

Example: *The little girl who ran down the lane each morning to catch the bus. She was my best friend.*

Solution: *The little girl who ran down the lane each morning to catch the bus was my best friend.*