

Punctuation

Possible Fragments and Long Sentences

The Punctuation - Possible Fragments and Long Sentences analysis lists groups of words that may be fragments or that may be run-on sentences or that may be sentences with a comma splice or that may have other problems.

Writer's WorkBench

Attention

Use the buttons in the WWB Toolbar at the right of the screen.

Type your name in the brackets.

[]

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READ

1. Read the information in the box in the **READ** column.

1. You need to be able to distinguish a fragment from a sentence. Study the following definitions.

A **clause** is a group of words that include a **subject** and a **verb**.

Example: **I love** you.

An **independent clause** is a **clause that does not begin with a relative pronoun** (who, which, that, whose, whom, where) **nor with a subordinate conjunction** (as, because, if, since, when . . .).

Example: **I love** you.

A dependent clause is a **clause** that begins with a **relative pronoun** (who, which, that, whose, whom, where) or with a **subordinate conjunction** (as, because, if, since, when . . .).

Example: **Whom I love**

Example: **Because I love** you

A sentence is a word group that includes at least one independent clause.

A fragment is a word group that does not include an independent clause.

RESPOND

2. Then, respond as directed in the **RESPOND** column.

1. **Direction**

In the [] before your answer, type an X.

- a. What does a sentence include that a fragment does not?

- [] a. A dependent clause
[] b. A subordinate conjunction
[] c. A relative pronoun
[] d. An independent clause
[] e. Both c and d

- b. Which of the following items are fragments?

- [] a. A tornado warning flashed across the screen.
[] b. When the governor saw the damage in the town.
[] c. He sent in the National Guard.
[] d. The townsfolk were grateful for the help.
[] e. Who appreciated the help.
[] f. Both b and e

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Answers to Item 1

- a. What does a sentence include that a fragment does not?
[X] d An independent clause
- b. Which of the following items are fragments?
[X] f Both b and e
- b. when the governor saw the damage in the town
- e. who appreciated the help

[A period, a question mark, or an exclamation point at the end of a group of words does not mean that the group of words is actually a sentence. You must analyze the group of words to determine whether or not the words make up a sentence.]

2. A fragment sounds like ----->

Examples: Even though I marry you

Who marries you

A sentence sounds like _____ ↘

Examples: I will not marry you.

Many people agree with me.

A "yes or no" question sounds like _____ ↗

Examples: Will you marry me?

Can you buy me an expensive ring?

2. ATTENTION

A fragment sounds like ----->

A simple sentence sounds like _____ ↘

A "yes or no" question sounds like _____ ↗

Directions: Read and listen to each item.

Type an X in the [] to identify whether each group of words is a fragment or a simple sentence or question.

- a. Seeing a falling star in the evening?
[] Fragment [] Sentence/question
- b. Seeing a falling star is an omen of good luck.
[] Fragment [] Sentence/question
- c. Seeing a falling star, I made a wish.
[] Fragment [] Sentence/question
- d. A wish on a falling star!
[] Fragment [] Sentence/question
- e. Did you wish on a falling star?
[] Fragment [] Sentence/question

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Responses to Item 2-

- a. Seeing a falling star in the evening? (Fragment)
- b. Seeing a falling star is an omen of good luck. (Sentence)
- c. Seeing a falling star, I made a wish. (Sentence)
- d. A wish on a falling star! (Fragment)
- e. Did you wish on a falling star? (Sentence/Question)

3. Study the following fragments and sentences.

Listen to the flat sound pattern of the fragment.

Fragment - **When** the **governor** **prepares** the budget

"When" is a subordinate conjunction. Therefore, the group of words is a dependent clause. The group of words does not include an independent clause; as a result, it is a fragment, not a sentence.

Listen to the sound pattern of a sentence.

Sentence - The **governor** **prepares** the budget.

Without the subordinate conjunction, the word group is an independent clause. Therefore, the word group is a sentence.

Listen to the sound pattern of the Yes-or-No Question.

Yes-or-No Question - **Does** the **governor** **prepare** the budget?

Listen to the sentence sound pattern of all other questions.

Question - **When** **does** the **governor** **prepare** the budget?

Only Yes-or-No questions have the upturned sound pattern. "When" is not acting as a subordinate conjunction in this sentence; instead, it is an adverb introducing a question.

Attention

All questions are also sentences, but we will use the "sentence" label to distinguish statements from questions.

3.

Direction: Type an X in the [] before the choice that identifies the construction of each group of words.

a. **When my computer crashed.**

- [] Fragment
- [] Sentence
- [] Yes-or-No question
- [] Question

b. **When did you get your computer?**

- [] Fragment
- [] Sentence
- [] Yes-or-No question
- [] Question

c. **Did you get a new computer?**

- [] Fragment
- [] Sentence
- [] Yes-or-No question
- [] Question

d. **What I eat for lunch.**

- [] Fragment
- [] Sentence
- [] Yes-or-No question
- [] Question

e. **Lunch is my favorite meal.**

- [] Fragment
- [] Sentence
- [] Yes-or-No question
- [] Question

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4. Study the following fragments and the revisions that make them sentences.

Fragment - Driving the semi at about 80 miles an hour.

Listen to the flat sound pattern of the fragment.

The group of words does not include a verb. *Driving* cannot be the verb because, to be a verb, an -ing word must have a helping verb, for example, *was driving*. If there is no verb, there is no reason to look for a subject.

Listen to the sound pattern of the revision.

Sentence - The driver was driving the semi at about 80 miles an hour.

Fragment - To keep a secret when I want to share it

The group of words includes a verb *want*. However, *want* is the verb and *I* is the subject of a **dependent clause** that begins with the subordinate conjunction "*when*." "Keep" and "share" cannot be verbs because they are a part of the infinitives "to keep" and "to share." An infinitive cannot serve as the verb in a clause. The word group does not include an independent clause. Therefore, it is not a sentence.

Study two possible revisions.

Sentence - I find it difficult to keep a secret when I want to share it. OR
To keep a secret, when I want to share it, troubles me.

- An infinitive phrase may serve as the subject of a clause.
- A dependent clause may be a part of a sentence that includes an independent clause.

Each of the word groups includes an independent clause; therefore, they are both sentences.

4. Check your answers to Item 3.

- a. When my computer crashed.
[X] Fragment
Correction: I nearly cried when my computer crashed.
OR When my computer crashed, I nearly cried.
- b. When did you get your computer?
[X] Question (sentence)
- c. Did you get a new computer?
[X] Yes or No Question (sentence)
- d. What I eat for lunch?
[X] Fragment
Correction: What I eat for lunch is my own business.
OR What did I eat for lunch?
- e. Lunch is my favorite meal.
[X] Sentence (statement)

How many groups of words did you identify correctly in Item 3?
Type the number in the next [].

Number correct []

If you missed one or more, explain, in the next [], what you have learned from your mistake(s). Think carefully.

I have learned []

Directions: In the [] write two sentence revisions of the following fragments.

a. Watching the sun set over the Pacific.

[]
[]

b. To bask in the sun while I am on vacation.

[]
[]

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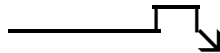
5.

REMEMBER

A sentence sounds like _____ 

A "yes or no" question sounds like _____ 

All other questions have the sentence sound pattern.



Every time that you hear one of those two sound patterns, you are hearing a sentence, a word group that includes an independent clause.

A sentence may include more than one sentence; that is, a sentence may include more than one sentence/question or "yes or no" question sound pattern.

5. **Direction:** In the [], type the number of sound patterns (1 to 4) within each of the sentences.

a. Edgar Allan Poe is considered by many to be the best writer of horror stories he had a difficult and tragic life.

[]

b. She wanted the chance to work in a large restaurant to expand her knowledge of different cultural dishes from around the world however, she had not had enough experience for the top chefs to hire her because they would not hire her, she decided to go to a culinary institute in Paris.

[]

c. Because all of Jane's friends are attending college after high school, she has decided to enroll in college too not because she wants to but because she wants to remain part of the clique.

[]

d. *The Next Generation* crew members have had many shows focus on them and their personal lives as a result, *The Next Generation* has had many different characters as the heroes of the show.

[]

e. Did you skip class did you go to a movie will you make up the work and will you explain your detention to your parents?

[]

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6. The sentences are **highlighted**. The dependent clauses within the sentences are underlined.

- a. [2] **Edgar Allan Poe is considered by many to be the best writer of horror stories**
he had a difficult and tragic life.
- b. [3] **She wanted the chance to work in a large restaurant to expand her knowledge of different cultural dishes from around the world**
however, she had not had enough experience for the top chefs to hire her
because they would not hire her, she decided to go to a culinary institute in Paris.
- c. [1] Because all of Jane's friends are attending college after high school, she has decided to enroll in college too not because she wants to but because she wants to remain part of the clique.
- d. [2] **The Next Generation crew members have had many shows focus on them and their personal lives**
as a result, The Next Generation has had many different characters as the heroes of the show.
- e. [4] **Did you skip class**
did you go to a movie
will you make up the work
and will you explain your detention to your parents?

6. How many sentences did you identify correctly in Item 4? Type the number in the next [].

I correctly identified [].

If you missed one or more, explain, in the next [], what you have learned from your mistake(s). Think carefully.

I have learned []

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7. Once you have decided that the group of words is not a fragment, you must decide whether or not the group of words includes more than one sentence. Use this information to help you recognize the structure of sentences.

One independent clause = A simple sentence

Examples: **Spring brings** flowers.
In the summer, **I spend** my time in the sun.

Two or more independent clauses =
A compound sentence

Note: The / marks the end of one sentence and the beginning of another sentence

Examples: The **weather has been** dreadful /, but the **fire** in the fireplace **has been** delightful.
Fall crowns the world with color /; **winter blows** all of the color away /; yet **spring sorts** out the green from the colors and **returns** it to the trees.

One independent clause
+ One or more dependent clauses
= A complex sentence

Examples: **When tulips bloom**, my **heart sings**.
I love to see the robins **that come** to my feeder.

Two or more independent clauses
+ One or more dependent clauses
= A compound-complex sentence

Examples: The **wind bit** my nose **when I was skiing** /, and **I felt** frozen.
Tom, who is still on the slopes, **will meet** me in the chalet /; **we will have** a good chat /; and **we'll have** hot chocolate too **if I have** my way.

7.

Directions

- (1) Read the sentences aloud.
Listen for the sentence sound pattern.
Identify the sentences within the sentences.
- (2) If the sentence includes more than one sentence, type a / between the sentences. Be sure that a sentence comes before and follows each slash.
 - a. Edgar Allan Poe is considered by many to be the best writer of horror stories he had a difficult and tragic life.
 - b. She wanted the chance to work in a large restaurant to expand her knowledge of different cultural dishes from around the world however, she had not had enough experience for the top chefs to hire her because they would not hire her, she decided to go to a culinary institute in Paris.
 - c. Because all of Jane's friends are attending college after high school, she has decided to enroll in college too because she wants to remain part of the clique.
 - d. *The Next Generation* crew members have had many shows focus on them and their personal lives furthermore, *The Next Generation* has had many different characters as the heroes of the show.

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Answers to item 7

- a. **Edgar Allan Poe is considered** by many to be the best writer of horror stories / **he had** a difficult and tragic life.
 - b. **She wanted** the chance to work in a large restaurant to expand her knowledge of different cultural dishes from around the world / however, **she had** not **had** enough experience for the top chefs to hire her / **because they would** not hire her, **she decided** to go to a culinary institute in Paris.
 - c. **Because** all of Jane's friends **are attending** college after high school, **she has decided** to enroll in college too **because she wants** to remain part of the clique.
 - d. **The Next Generation crew members have had** many shows focus on them and their personal lives / furthermore, **The Next Generation has had** many different characters as the heroes of the show.
8. You will need to analyze each sentence that is printed in Problem Sentences to determine whether or not the sentence is a problem sentence.

Sometimes, WWB identifies awkward sentences as problem sentences. In either case, you will want to make any needed revisions.

8. Directions

- (1) The following sentences are similar to but not the same as the sentences in the left column. Identify the sentences within these sentences.
- (2) If the sentence includes more than one sentence, type a / between the sentences. Be sure that a sentence comes before and follows each slash.

- a. **Edgar Allan Poe is considered by many to be the best writer of horror stories but he had a difficult and tragic life.**
- b. **She wanted the chance to work in a large restaurant to expand her knowledge of different cultural dishes from around the world yet she had not had enough experience for the top chefs to hire her she decided to go to a culinary institute in Paris.**
- c. **All of Jane's friends are attending college after high school so she has decided to enroll in college too because she wants to remain part of the clique.**
- d. **The Next Generation has had many focuses and has had many different characters as the heroes of the show.**

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Compare your / in item 8 to those in the following sentences.

- a. Edgar Allan Poe is considered by many to be the best writer of horror stories / but he had a difficult and tragic life.
- b. She wanted the chance to work in a large restaurant to expand her knowledge of different cultural dishes from around the world / yet she had not had enough experience for the top chefs to hire her / she decided to go to a culinary institute in Paris.
- c. All of Jane's friends are attending college after high school / so she has decided to enroll in college too because she wants to remain part of the clique.
- d. *The Next Generation* has had many focuses and has had many different characters as the heroes of the show.

9. Sentences may be joined in one of two ways.

(1) A comma (,) and a coordinate conjunction

The wind bit my nose when I was skiing{, and} I felt frozen.

Coordinate conjunctions = and, or, nor, but, for, so, yet

ATTENTION

Comma Splice Error: Sentences joined with only a comma.

Run-on Sentence Error: Sentences that run into each other because they are not joined with a comma nor a coordinate conjunction.

(2) A semicolon (;)

The wind bit my nose when I was skiing{;} I felt frozen.

HOWEVER, IF ANY OF THE JOINED SENTENCES INCLUDE COMMAS, YOU MUST USE A SEMICOLON **or** A SEMICOLON AND A COORDINATE CONJUNCTION BETWEEN ALL SENTENCES.

When I was skiing, the wind bit my nose{;} I felt frozen.

When I was skiing, the wind bit my nose{; and} I felt frozen.

MOREOVER, IF ANY OF THE SENTENCES ARE JOINED WITH A SEMICOLON, YOU MUST USE A SEMICOLON (with or without a coordinate conjunction) BETWEEN ALL SENTENCES.

I was skiing{;} the wind bit my nose{; and} I felt frozen.

9. Directions: If a sentence includes more than one sentence, join the sentences correctly.

ONLY add punctuation.

a. Edgar Allan Poe is considered by many to be the best writer of horror stories he had a difficult and tragic life.

Edgar Allan Poe is considered by many to be the best writer of horror stories but he had a difficult and tragic life.

b. She wanted the chance to work in a large restaurant to expand her knowledge of different cultural dishes from around the world however, she had not had enough experience for the top chefs to hire her because they would not hire her, she decided to go to a culinary institute in Paris.

She wanted the chance to work in a large restaurant to expand her knowledge of different cultural dishes from around the world yet she had not had enough experience for the top chefs to hire her she decided to go to a culinary institute in Paris.

c. Because all of Jane's friends are attending college after high school, she has decided to enroll in college too because she wants to remain part of the clique.

All of Jane's friends are attending college after high school so she has decided to enroll in college too because she wants to remain part of the clique.

d. *The Next Generation* crew members have had many shows focus on them and their personal lives furthermore, *The Next Generation* has had many different characters as the heroes of the show.

The Next Generation has had many focuses and has had many different characters as the heroes of the show.

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10. Here are the correctly punctuated Item 9 sentences.

- a. Edgar Allan Poe is considered by many to be the best writer of horror stories; he had a difficult and tragic life.

Edgar Allan Poe is considered by many to be the best writer of horror stories, but he had a difficult and tragic life.

- b. She wanted the chance to work in a large restaurant to expand her knowledge of different cultural dishes from around the world; however, she had not had enough experience for the top chefs to hire her; because they would not hire her, she decided to go to a culinary institute in Paris.

She wanted the chance to work in a large restaurant to expand her knowledge of different cultural dishes from around the world; yet she had not had enough experience for the top chefs to hire her; she decided to go to a culinary institute in Paris.

- c. Because all of Jane's friends are attending college after high school, she has decided to enroll in college too because she wants to remain part of the clique.

All of Jane's friends are attending college after high school, so she has decided to enroll in college too because she wants to remain part of the clique.

- d. *The Next Generation* crew members have had many shows focus on them and their personal lives; furthermore, *The Next Generation* has had many different characters as the heroes of the show.

The Next Generation has had many focuses and has had many different characters as the heroes of the show.

10. Direction: Write the rule (number-letter)- (1), (2), (2a), or (2b) - that governs the joining method in each sentence in the left column. If no rule applies, leave the [] blank.

RULES

(1) A comma (,) and a coordinate conjunction

(2) A semicolon (;)

(a) **HOWEVER**, IF ANY OF THE JOINED SENTENCES INCLUDE COMMAS, YOU MUST USE A SEMICOLON **or** A SEMICOLON AND A COORDINATE CONJUNCTION BETWEEN ALL SENTENCES.

(b) **MOREOVER**, IF ANY OF THE SENTENCES ARE JOINED WITH A SEMICOLON, YOU MUST USE A SEMICOLON (with or without a coordinate conjunction) BETWEEN ALL SENTENCES.

a. []
[]

b. []
[]

c. []
[]

d. []
[]

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The correct rules for item 10

(1) A comma (,) and a coordinate conjunction

(2) A semicolon (;)

(a) **HOWEVER**, IF ANY OF THE JOINED SENTENCES INCLUDE COMMAS, YOU MUST USE A SEMICOLON **or** A SEMICOLON AND A COORDINATE CONJUNCTION BETWEEN ALL SENTENCES.

(b) **MOREOVER**, IF ANY OF THE SENTENCES ARE JOINED WITH A SEMICOLON, YOU MUST USE A SEMICOLON (with or without a coordinate conjunction) BETWEEN ALL SENTENCES.

a. 2]
 1]

b. 2a]
 2b]

c.]
 1]

d. 2a]
]

11. You must carefully analyze the sentences listed under Problem Sentences.

- a. Some of the sentences may be Sentence Fragments.
- b. Some of the sentences may be Run-on Sentences or may have a Comma Splice.
- c. Some of the sentences may need to be revised so that they can be read more easily.
- d. Some of the sentences may be correct as they are.

YOU must decide.

11. Type an X in the [] that identifies the correct analysis of each of the following items.

- a. Not unlike parents who work hard and relentlessly in rearing their children and who have children who grow into responsible adults.

] Fragment
] Run-on Sentence] Comma Splice
] Sentence that needs revision
] Correct as is

- b. Corey, with all of the extra attention shown to him, felt important Stephanie, Corey's sister, felt unloved and unimportant.

] Fragment
] Run-on Sentence] Comma Splice
] Sentence that needs revision
] Correct as is

- c. Sarah felt that she had the ability to get even better grades, she was going to push herself a little harder in order to get all A's on her next report card.

] Fragment
] Run-on Sentence] Comma Splice
] Sentence that needs revision
] Correct as is

- d. A parent who sits down and explains to their child what they did wrong and why it was wrong help their child understand the expectations of the parents.

] Fragment
] Run-on Sentence] Comma Splice
] Sentence that needs revision
] Correct as is

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Responses for Item 11.

- a. **[X] Fragment**
Possible Revision: Parents who work hard and relentlessly rearing their children have children who grow into responsible adults.

- b. **[X] Run-on Sentence**
Possible Revision: Corey, with all of the extra attention shown to him, felt important; Stephanie, Corey's sister, felt unloved and unimportant.

- c. **[X] Comma Splice**
Possible Revision: Sarah felt that she had the ability to get even better grades, and she was going to push herself a little harder in order to get all A's on her next report card.

- d. **[X] Sentence that needs revision**
Possible Revision: Parents who sit down and explain to their child what he or she did wrong and why it was wrong help their child understand the expectations of the parents.

THE END

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