

Fragments

Sentence Fragments

Sentence fragments are incomplete thoughts, and therefore, incomplete sentences. They are incorrectly punctuated to look like whole sentences by the use of an initial capital letter and a final period or other end punctuation. Fragments differ from dependent clauses because they may contain neither a subject nor a verb.

FRAGMENT: Being the last person in line. (Missing a subject and a verb)

FRAGMENT: As I drove down the street. (A dependent clause, the “as” makes it a fragment)

FRAGMENT: Under the sycamore tree. (Missing a subject and a verb)

Sentence fragment errors distort the writer’s intended meaning because they do not express a complete thought. In the examples which follow, the fragments appear in *italics*.

FRAGMENT Larry was extremely excited. *Because he had won the race.*

REVISED Larry was extremely excited because he had won the race.

FRAGMENT *Although he does not appeal to me.* Mr. Headlund is a fine teacher.

REVISED Although he does not appeal to me, Mr. Headlund is a fine teacher.

FRAGMENT Skiing is everything a hobby should be. *Exciting, dangerous, and fun.*

REVISED Skiing is everything a hobby should be: exciting, dangerous, and fun.

CHECK-TEST

DIRECTIONS: Underline all fragments. In the space provided, correct the sentence fragments.
Several correction possibilities may exist.

1. Jasper is my best friend. Being that we both enjoy sports.

2. At a precise time every morning. The postman can be seen walking along our street.

3. This is one of my hopes. To fly my own plane.

4. The band presented an up-beat program. Although I don't appreciate their kind of music.

5. In my town there are many kinds of people. Rich, poor, happy, sad, successful, and unsuccessful.

6. If you are sincerely interested in becoming an auto mechanic. You should own an old car and experiment with doing your own auto repair.

7. After moving all of the furniture from the living room. I suffered from a severe back ache.

8. Pam backed closer and closer to the edge of the cliff. At least falling off into the ravine.

9. If what you say is true. Then why did you agree to travel with Helen.

10. The barn will take at least three weeks to paint. Even with four painters.

Answer on last page

Examples of Correct Answers:

Note: There is more than one way to correct these fragments. If in doubt, ask a tutor.

1. Jasper is my best friend because we both enjoy sports.
2. At a precise time every morning, the postman can be seen walking along our street.
3. One of my hopes is to fly my own plane.
4. The band presented an up-beat program, although I don't appreciate their kind of music.
5. In my town there are many kinds of people: rich, poor, happy, sad, successful, and unsuccessful.
6. If you are sincerely interested in becoming an auto mechanic, you should own an old car and experiment with doing your own auto repairs.
7. After moving all of the furniture from the living room, I suffered from a severe back ache.
8. Pam backed closer and closer to the edge of the cliff; at last she fell off into the ravine.
9. If what you say is true, why did you agree to travel with Helen?
10. The barn will take at least three weeks to paint, even with four painters.