

FRAGMENTS

GRAMMAR



WHAT IS A FRAGMENT?

Fragments are incomplete sentences. They lack a subject or a verb or both, or they do not include all the phrases necessary to make a complete idea. For example:

MISSING A VERB

The tall tree, the one that I loved to climb.

MISSING A SUBJECT

Ran as fast as he could.

MISSING A SUBJECT

Knowing that he was in big trouble.

BELONGS TO ANOTHER SENTENCE

That tall tree, the one that I loved to climb.

TWO EASY FIXES FOR FRAGMENTS:

1: make it a complete sentence

2: connect it to a nearby sentence

FRAGMENTS WITH "-ING" VERBS

"-Ing" verbs (also called present participles or gerunds) look like regular verbs, but they cannot function as the main verb of a sentence.

Example: Susansinging.

Like all fragments, fragments with "-ing" verbs can be corrected in two ways: **changing the fragment to a complete sentence or connecting it to a sentence that comes before or after it.**

Correct: Susan was singing.



FRAGMENTS WITH LINKING WORDS

Many fragments open with linking words such as *because*, *although*, or *that*. These words are called subordinating conjunctions; they are connecting words that make the sentence unable to stand alone.

Example: Because I ran out of milk.

Like all fragments, fragments with linking words can be corrected in two ways: **changing the fragment to a complete sentence or connecting it to a sentence that comes before or after it.**

Correct: Because I ran out of milk, I can't eat cereal today.

FRAGMENTS WITH LISTS

People often write fragments that are lists and examples. These fragments tend to start with words indicating an example: *such as*, *for example*, *including*.

Example: I bought school supplies. Such as pens, pencils, and folders.

Like all fragments, fragments with lists can be corrected in two ways: **changing the fragment to a complete sentence or connecting it to a sentence that comes before or after it.**

Correct: I bought school supplies, such as pens, pencils, and folders.

PRACTICE WITH FRAGMENTS

Try your hand at fixing these fragment mistakes. Use a different strategy for each correction you make:

1. That our society needs to protect its most valuable members.
2. Although there are some strong arguments in favor of higher taxes.
3. Many groups have had to fight for their civil rights. For example, African Americans, Native Americans, and women.
4. There are many valuable charity organizations to volunteer for. Including the Humane Society and the Boys' Club.

Answers: 1) I believe that our society needs to protect its most valuable members. 2) Although there are some strong arguments in favor of higher taxes, many people believe that lower taxes put money directly in the pockets of Americans rather than in the hands of the government. 3) Many groups, for example, African Americans, Native Americans, and women, have had to fight for their civil rights. 4) There are many valuable charity organizations to volunteer for, including the Humane Society and the Boys' Club.