Sentences, Run-ons, and Fragments

**Independent Clauses:** An independent clause is a phrase that has a subject and a verb. Here are a few examples of complete sentences with their independent clauses underlined.

 Tom studied.

Because she studies regularly, she is prepared for the test.

It has been raining all day.

 The tutor is quiet, and he's polite. (compound sentence)

**Fragments:** Unlike an independent clause, a fragment is only a piece of a complete thought that has been punctuated like a sentence. Fragments cannot stand alone as a sentence. Do not use fragments on their own.

 To the store. (Prepositional phrase fragment)

 Walking to the store. (Present participial phrase)

 Because she studies regularly. (Dependent/adverb clause fragment)

**There are several ways to correct fragments. These are three common ways:**

1. *Connect the fragment to another compete sentence or use a comma.*

Walking to the store. She saw a car accident.

Walking to the store**,** she saw a car accident.

1. *Remove conjunctions and similar words to make the fragment a complete sentence.*

 Because she studies regularly.

She studies regularly.

1. *Add conjunctions to connect the fragment to another fragment or sentence to form a complete sentence.*

Ann walked all alone. To the store.

Ann walked all alone and went to the store.

**Run-ons:** A run-on occurs when two sentences are combined without the proper punctuation and/or connecting words.

**A fused sentence** occurs when two sentences are written together without any punctuation.

 Joe was happy about the grade he felt like celebrating.

**A comma splice** occurs when a comma is used between two sentences without any conjunctions (such as "and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet").

Joe was happy about the grade, he felt like celebrating.

**There are several ways to correct the run-ons above. These are the three most common ways:**

1. *Use a period between the sentences.*



 Joe was happy about the grade. He felt like celebrating.

1. *Connect two related sentences with a comma followed by a coordinating conjunction: and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet.*



 Joe was happy about the grade, so he felt like celebrating.

1. *Add a dependent clause signal word to create a complex sentence. Common signal words include the following: because, if, although, when, who, which, etc...*



 Because Joe was happy about the grade, he felt like celebrating.

 *OR*

 Joe, who was happy about the grade, felt like celebrating.

**Test your knowledge! Label each word group as one of the following:
Fragment (F), Run-On (R), or Correct (C).**

1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Although Mary has been my best friend.

2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Her husband loves to cook, however, he does not like to clean the kitchen afterwards.

3.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I found three gold coins I can’t believe it!

4.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Studying in the Tutoring and Learning Center.

5.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Reading the textbook is important, attendance is crucial too.