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Chapter Preview:

- What's the Point of Correcting Fragments?
- Understanding the Point of Correcting Fragments: One Student Writer's Response
- Applying the Point: Correcting Fragments

Fragments

A fragment is an incomplete thought.

Thinking about a real-life situation helps us to understand the impact of fragments on our ability to communicate. The following photo illustrates a couple in search of a place to live. Read about the situation below and answer the question “What’s the point of learning about fragments?”



What's the Point of Correcting Fragments?

THE POINT OF CORRECTING FRAGMENTS



Practice 1

Suppose you are looking for a new apartment. You ask two landlords the same questions. Below are the two replies:

Landlord A:

"If it's a little messy, well... sometimes partial refunds... for damages... not leaving behind personal belongings..."

Landlord B:

"You will get your security deposit back if you leave the apartment in the same or better condition than it is in right now, if you don't leave any of your belongings behind, and if you pay your last month's rent. We can go around the apartment right now and make a list of the condition of each room so we'll have a reference point when you're ready to move out."

With which landlord will you be able to communicate easily and clearly if you move in?

Landlord B

What's the point of learning about fragments?

The point of learning about fragments is to increase the power of personal expression

through the use of complete sentences; to identify personal patterns in the usage of

fragments; and to understand how to revise fragments into complete thoughts.

Understanding the Point of Correcting Fragments: One Student Writer's Response

The following paragraph offers one writer's reaction to the statements about the security deposit given by the landlords.

Landlord A never finished a thought, so I have no idea what he means. His answers are vague, and he doesn't seem to care about being understood. Maybe he thinks I should just know what he means. In contrast, Landlord B spoke clearly using complete sentences. I know exactly what is expected.

Landlord B is going to be easier to talk to and understand. The difference between the two responses makes me realize how important it is to use complete sentences if you want to be understood. When others can understand your thoughts, you can connect with them and even change how they think about things or how they act. That's real power.

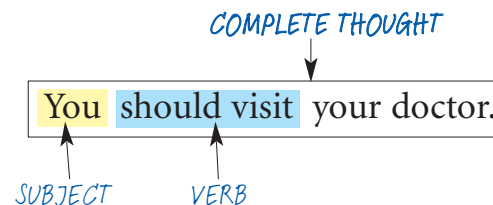
Applying the Point: Correcting Fragments

The ability to write ideas in complete thoughts or sentences is an important tool in building coherent paragraphs and essays. A sentence has two traits.

SENTENCE: Complete Thought-Complete Information

TRAIT ONE: A sentence states a complete and independent thought.

TRAIT TWO: A sentence contains a subject and a verb.



A **sentence** contains all the information needed to clearly express a complete thought. In contrast, a fragment is often recognized by what is missing from the thought. A **fragment** is an incomplete thought.

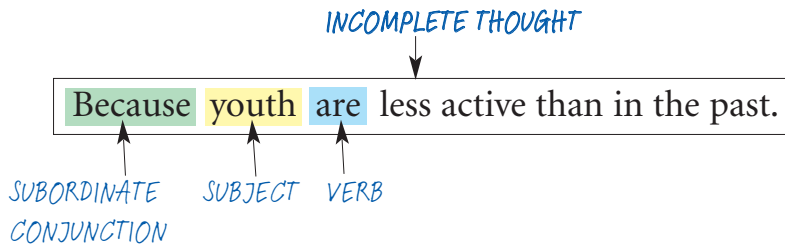
FRAGMENT: Incomplete Thought-Missing Information

A **fragment** is missing one of the following: a subject, a verb, or both subject and verb.

Missing Subject:	Does not disqualify you from exercising.
Missing Verb:	Edward taking a physical exam.
Missing Subject and Verb:	To safely participate and to reduce risk of injury.

Even when a group of words includes both a subject and a verb, it still can be a fragment. A subordinate conjunction signals a fragment that has both a subject and a verb. These types of fragments are missing an independent clause:

Fragment (Missing an Independent Clause):



To identify a fragment, ask the following questions:

- Does the idea have a verb?
- What is the subject of the verb?
- Does the idea express a complete thought?

ESL Hint:

Prove a sentence is a sentence by turning it into a question. A fragment cannot be made into a logical question. Turn the statement into a question that can be answered with "yes" or "no"

Fragment:

*Going to the game tomorrow.
Are going to the game tomorrow?*

Sentence:

*Susan and Jonathan are going to the game tomorrow.
Are Susan and Jonathan going to the game tomorrow?*

IDENTIFYING FRAGMENTS

Identify fragments and sentences. Write **F** for *fragment* next to the incomplete thoughts. Write **S** for *sentence* next to the complete thoughts.

- S**..... 1. Regular physical activity, fitness, and exercise are critically important.
- F**..... 2. For the health and well being of people of all ages.
- S**..... 3. Research has proven that all individuals can benefit from regular physical activity.
- F**..... 4. Whether they engage in vigorous exercise or some type of moderate physical activity.
- F**..... 5. Those who do not exercise on a regular basis.

Practice 2

More practice identifying fragments:
<www.mywritinglab.com>

Types of Fragments

This section discusses seven common types of fragments (¹prepositional phrase, ²appositive phrase, ³infinitive phrase, ⁴gerund phrase, ⁵participle phrase, ⁶dependent clause, ⁷relative clause) and techniques you can use to revise fragments into sentences. Fragments are either phrases or dependent clauses punctuated as if they are sentences. A writer may use two techniques to revise fragments into sentences:

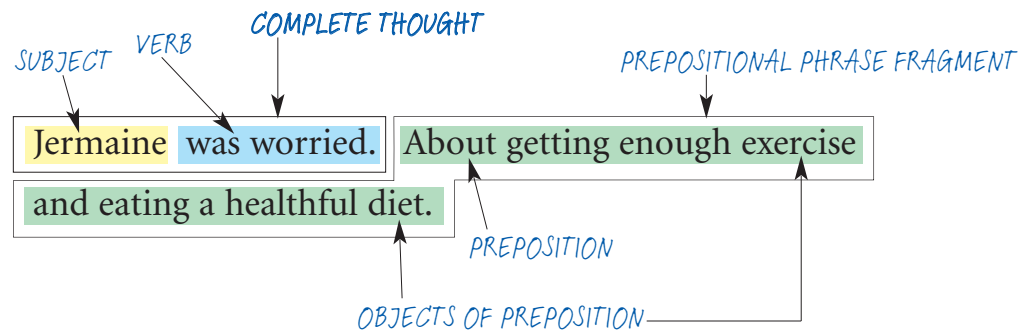
- Combine existing ideas.
- Add missing ideas

Phrase Fragments

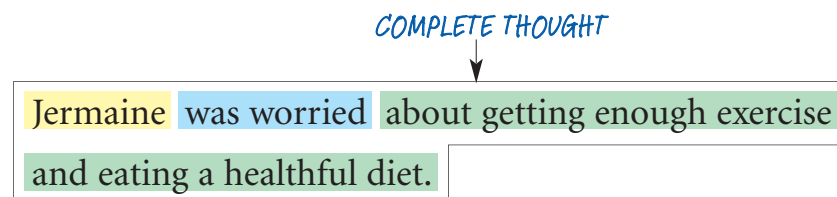
A **phrase** is a group of words that acts as a single unit. A phrase is a fragment because it does not contain both a subject and a verb. To create a sentence, add information (such as a subject, a verb, or both) to the phrase, or join the phrase to an existing sentence.

1 PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE

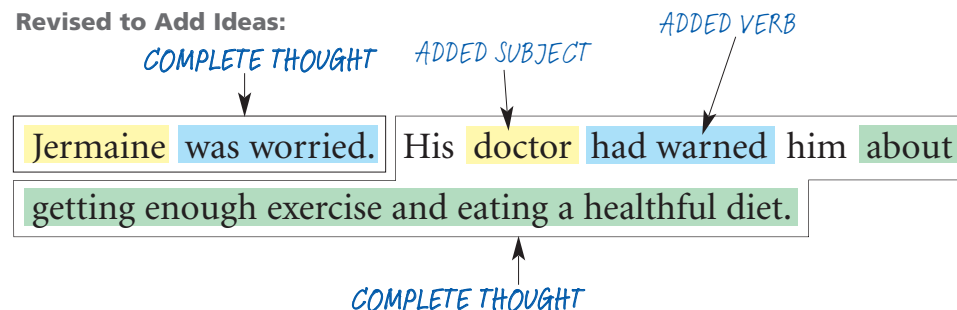
A **prepositional phrase** begins with a preposition (such as *at*, *or*, *in*, *to*, *toward*, *for*, *since*, and *of*) and ends with the object of the preposition. A prepositional phrase adds information about direction, manner, space, and time such as *in the house* or *after the game*.



Revised to Combine Ideas:



Revised to Add Ideas:



Practice 3

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE FRAGMENTS

Build two new sentences using the prepositional phrase. First, combine the existing sentence with the prepositional phrase to create a new sentence. Then, create another new sentence by adding missing information to the prepositional phrase.

prepositional phrase:
for your health and weight management

sentence:
Body composition is important to consider.

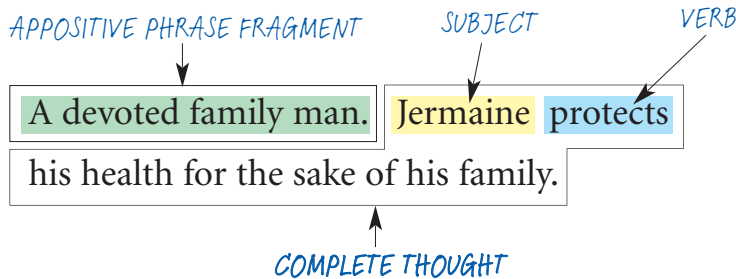
1. COMBINE IDEAS: *Body composition is important to consider for your health and your weight management.*

2. ADD IDEAS: *Body composition is important to consider. It affects your health and your weight management.*

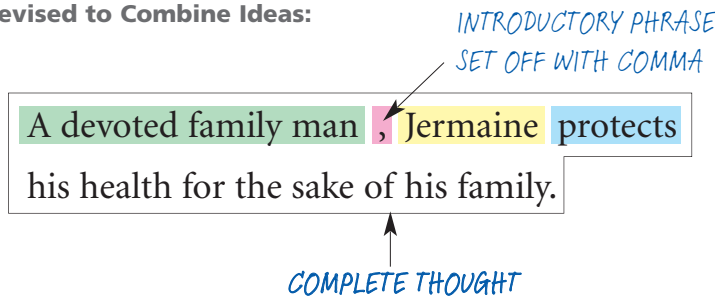
More practice correcting prepositional phrase fragments:
<www.mywritinglab.com>

2 APPOSITIVE PHRASE

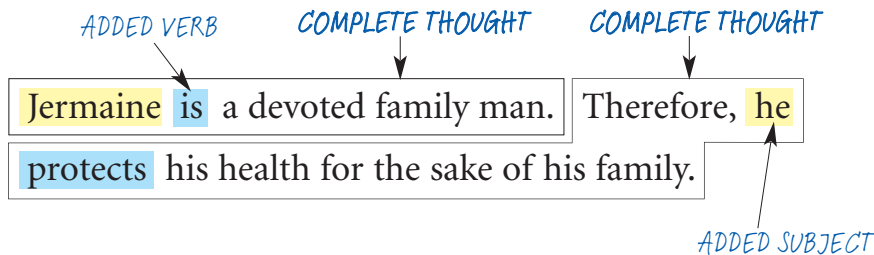
An **appositive phrase** contains a noun that renames or describes another noun in the same sentence. An appositive phrase combines with an complete thought to add detail. Place an appositive phrase next to the noun it renames.



Revised to Combine Ideas:



Revised to Add Ideas:



Practice 4

APPOSITIVE PHRASE FRAGMENTS

Build two new sentences using the appositive phrase. First, combine the existing sentence with the appositive phrase to create a new sentence. Then, create another new sentence by adding missing information to the appositive phrase.

Appositive phrase:

the range of motion around a joint

Sentence:

Flexibility can help prevent injuries through all stages of life.

1. COMBINE IDEAS: *Flexibility, the range of motion around a joint, can help prevent injuries*

through all stages of life.

2. ADD IDEAS: *Flexibility is the range of motion*

around a joint. It can help prevent injuries

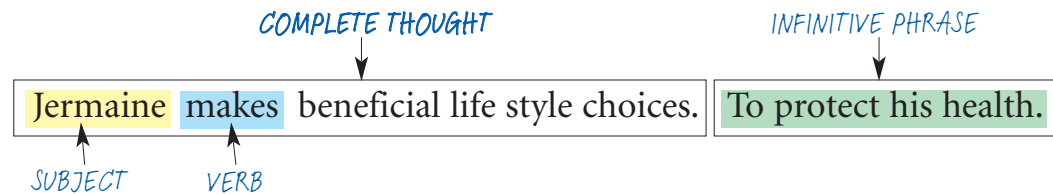
through all stages of life.



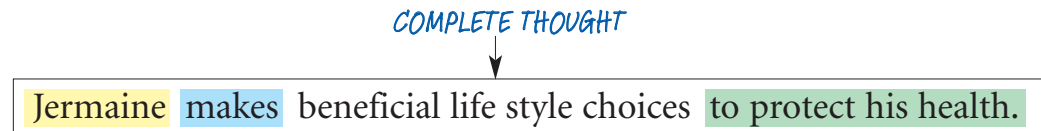
More practice correcting appositive phrase fragments:
<www.mywritinglab.com>

3 INFINITIVE PHRASE

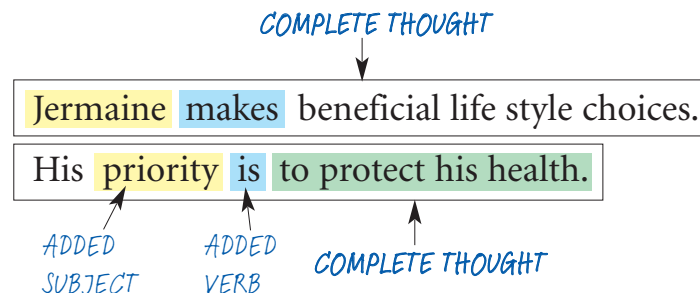
An infinitive is a form of a verb, but it is not a verb. Combining *to* with a verb forms an **infinitive** as in the following: *to go*, *to talk*, and *to think*. An **infinitive phrase** is made up of an infinitive and the object of the infinitive such as *to quit smoking* or *to run a mile*. An infinitive phrase can act as a noun, adjective, or adverb.



Revised to Combine Ideas:



Revised to Add Ideas:



Practice 5

INFINITIVE PHRASE FRAGMENTS

Build two new sentences using the infinitive phrase. First, combine the existing sentence with the infinitive phrase to create a new sentence. Then, create another new sentence by adding missing information to the infinitive phrase.

Infinitive phrase:

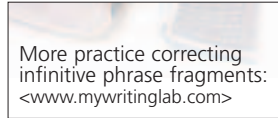
to improve your flexibility

Sentence:

Swim or stretch to lengthen your muscles.

1. COMBINE IDEAS: *To improve your flexibility, swim or stretch to lengthen your muscles.*

2. ADD IDEAS: *You must exercise to improve your flexibility.*



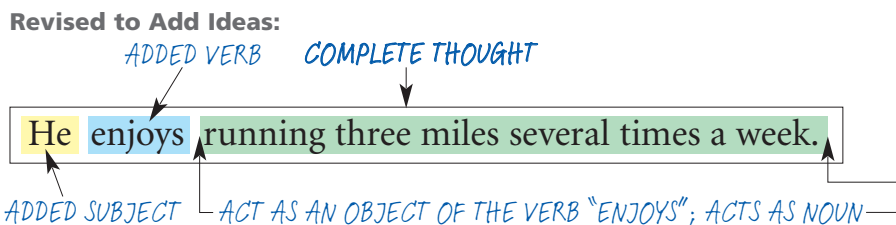
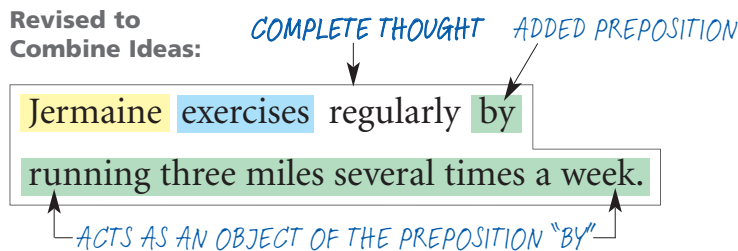
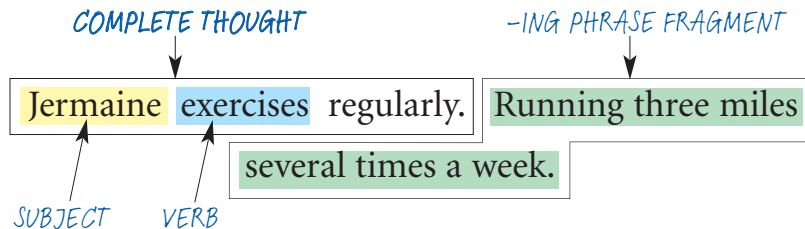
More practice correcting infinitive phrase fragments: <www.mywritinglab.com>

-ING PHRASES: GERUNDS AND PARTICIPLES

An *-ing* phrase can function as either a noun or an adjective. An *-ing* phrase used as a noun is called a **gerund**. An *-ing* phrase used as an adjective is called a **participle**.

4 Gerund Phrase

A gerund is a form of a verb, but it is not a verb. A gerund is a noun that ends in *-ing*, such as *going*, *talking*, and *thinking*. A **gerund phrase** is made up of a gerund and the object of the gerund such as *quitting smoking* or *running three miles*. A gerund phrase functions as a noun. For example, a gerund phrase can be the subject of a sentence or an object of a verb or preposition.



Practice 7

-ING FRAGMENTS

Build two new sentences using the participle phrase. First, combine the existing sentence with the participle phrase to create a new sentence. Then, create another new sentence by adding missing information to the participle phrase.

Participle phrase:

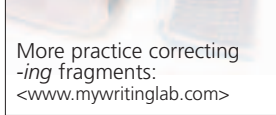
listening to her body

Sentence:

Tisha monitors her heart rate, physical discomfort, and level of fatigue.

1. COMBINE IDEAS: *Listening to her body, Tisha monitors her heart rate, physical discomfort, and level of fatigue.*

2. ADD IDEAS: *She is listening to her body.*



More practice correcting *-ing* fragments:
<www.mywritinglab.com>

PHRASE FRAGMENTS

Read the following sets of ideas. Identify the type of phrase fragment. Then, revise the ideas to eliminate fragments by combining or adding ideas.

1. Bones play many roles in the body. Providing structure, protecting organs, anchoring muscles, and storing calcium.

TYPE OF FRAGMENT: *-ing phrase (participle)*

REVISED SENTENCE: *Providing structure, protecting organs, anchoring muscles, and storing calcium, bones play many roles in the body.*

2. Adequate calcium consumption and weight-bearing physical activity are necessary. To build strong bones and optimize bone mass.

TYPE OF FRAGMENT: *infinitive phrase*

REVISED SENTENCE: *Adequate calcium consumption and weight-bearing physical activity are necessary to build strong bones and optimize bone mass.*

Practice 8

More practice correcting phrase fragments: <www.mywritinglab.com>

3. The body cannot produce calcium. A mineral needed to produce bone.

TYPE OF FRAGMENT: *appositive phrase*

REVISED SENTENCE: *The body cannot produce calcium, a mineral needed to produce bone.*

4. By the age of 20. The average woman has acquired most of her skeletal mass.

TYPE OF FRAGMENT: *prepositional phrase*

REVISED SENTENCE: *By the age of 20, the average woman has acquired most of her skeletal mass.*

5. Eating foods and drinking beverages that contain lots of calcium during childhood.

TYPE OF FRAGMENT: *-ing phrase (gerund)*

REVISED SENTENCE: *Eating foods and drinking beverages that contain lots of calcium during childhood builds strong bones.*

6. Rap star Nelly got milk. To build his bones.

TYPE OF FRAGMENT: *infinitive phrase*

REVISED SENTENCE: *Rap star Nelly got milk to build his bones.*



Practice 8

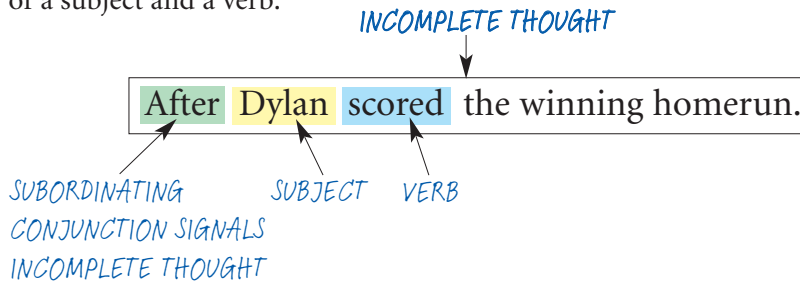
Clause Fragments

A **clause** is a set of words that contains a subject and a verb. An **independent clause** states a complete thought in a sentence that begins with a capital letter and ends with punctuation such as a period or a semicolon. In contrast, a **dependent clause** expresses an incomplete thought or fragment.

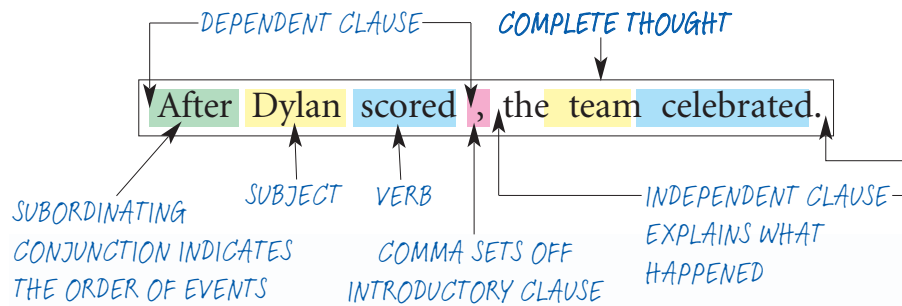
For more on dependent and subordinate clauses, see Chapters 00 and 00, pages 000-000 and pages 000-000.

6 DEPENDENT CLAUSE

A **dependent clause**, also known as a **subordinate clause**, does not make sense on its own. A dependent clause is formed by placing a subordinating conjunction in front of a subject and a verb:



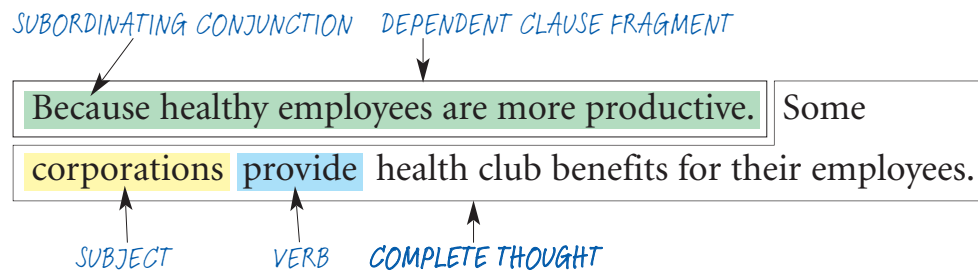
A **subordinating conjunction** states the relationship between two clauses:



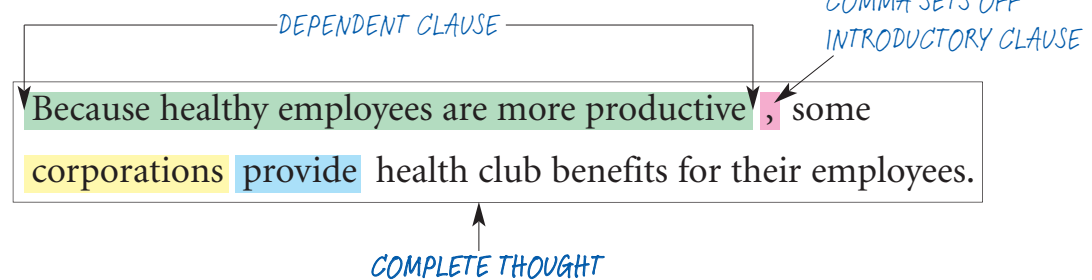
The following chart lists common subordinating conjunctions based on the relationships they express.

Subordinating Conjunctions and the Relationships They Express				
Cause	Contrast	Time	Place	Condition
as	as if	after	where	even if
because	although	as	wherever	if
in order that	even though	as long as		only if
now that	though	before		unless
since	whereas	once		when
so	while	since		whether or not
		until		
		when		
		whenever		
		while		

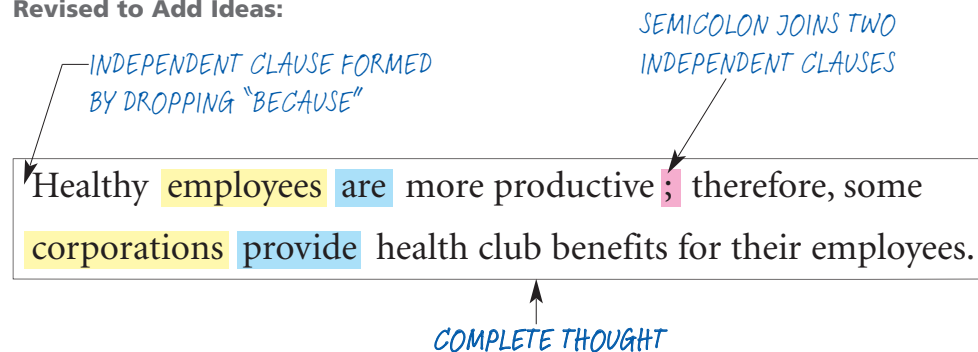
To create a sentence, combine a dependent clause with an independent clause. Or revise the dependent clause into an independent clause by dropping the subordinating conjunction.



Revised to Combine Ideas:



Revised to Add Ideas:



Practice 9

DEPENDENT CLAUSE FRAGMENTS

Build two new sentences using the following sets of ideas. First, combine the existing sentence with the dependent clause to create a new sentence. Then, create another new sentence by revising the dependent clause into an independent clause.

Dependent clause:

because young children grow rapidly and have increased iron requirements

Sentence:

Young children are at risk of iron deficiency.

1. COMBINE IDEAS: *Because young children grow rapidly and have increased iron*

requirements, they are at great risk of iron deficiency.

2. ADD IDEAS: *Young children grow rapidly and have increased iron requirements.*



More practice correcting dependent clause fragments:
<www.mywritinglab.com>

7 RELATIVE CLAUSE

One type of dependent clause is the relative clause, such as *who scored the winning home run*. A **relative clause** describes a noun or pronoun in an independent clause. A **relative pronoun** introduces the relative clause and relates it to the noun or pronoun it describes.

Relative Pronouns

who	whom	whose	which	that
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Practice 11

CLAUSE FRAGMENTS

Revise the ideas to eliminate clause fragments.

Answers may vary.

1. The heart needs a constant supply of oxygen and nutrients. Which are carried to it by the blood in the coronary arteries.

The heart needs a constant supply of oxygen

and nutrients, which are carried to it by the

blood in the coronary arteries.

2. When the coronary arteries become narrowed or clogged by cholesterol and fat deposits. They cannot supply enough blood to the heart, and the result is coronary heart disease (CHD).

When the coronary arteries become narrowed or clogged by cholesterol and fat deposits, they

cannot supply enough blood to the heart, and the result is coronary heart disease (CHD).

3. Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance. That occurs naturally in all parts of the body. That your body needs to function normally.

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that occurs naturally in all parts of the body.

Your body needs cholesterol to function normally.

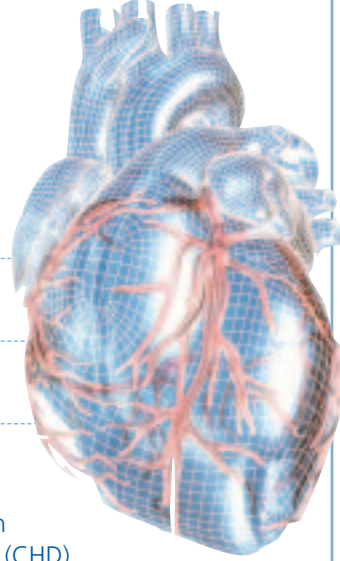
4. Unlike age, high cholesterol can be controlled. Which is a factor beyond our control.

Unlike age, which is a factor beyond our control, high cholesterol can be controlled.

5. You are at higher risk of having coronary heart disease. If you smoke, are overweight, and eat a high-fat diet.

You are at higher risk of having coronary heart disease if you smoke, are overweight,

and eat a high-fat diet.



Review

REVISING FRAGMENTS INTO SENTENCES

FRAGMENT

REVISED INTO SENTENCES

Prepositional Phrase →**Sentence**

for your health and weight management

Body composition is important to consider for your health and weight management.

Appositive Phrase →**Sentence**

the range of motion around a joint

Flexibility, the range of motion around a joint, can help prevent injuries through all stages of life.

Infinitive Phrase →**Sentence**

to improve your flexibility

To improve your flexibility, try activities that lengthen the muscles, such as swimming or stretching.

Gerund Phrase →**Sentence**

stretching 30 minutes every day

Stretching 30 minutes every day and jogging three times a week keeps Alex in shape.

Participle Phrase →**Sentence**

listening to her body

Listening to her body, Tisha monitors her heart rate, physical discomfort, and level of fatigue.

Dependent Clause →**Sentence**

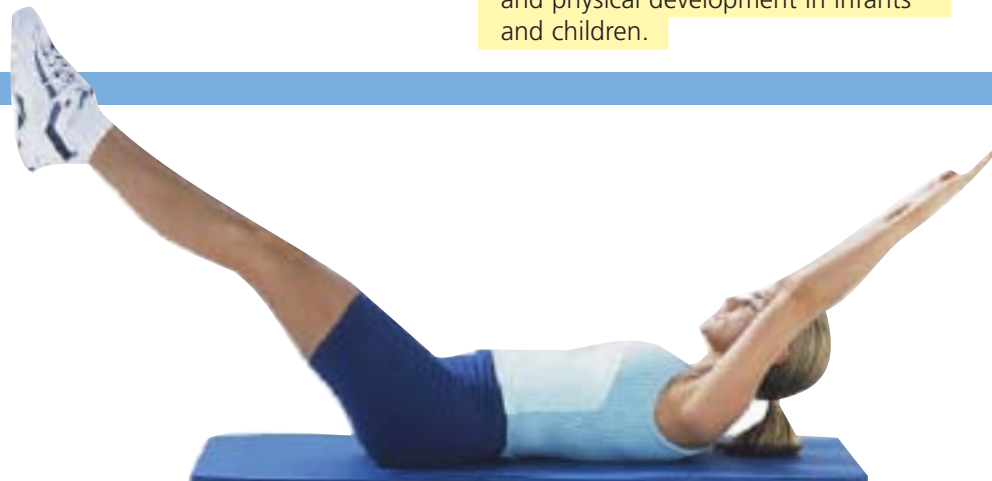
because young children grow rapidly and have increased iron requirements

Because young children grow rapidly and have increased iron requirements, they are at great risk of iron deficiency.

Relative Clause →**Sentence**

which impairs mental and physical development in infants and children

The most common cause of anemia is iron deficiency, which impairs mental and physical development in infants and children.



Practice 12

FRAGMENTS

Revise the ideas to eliminate fragments by combining or adding ideas.

Answers may vary.

1. Sleep apnea is a common disorder. That can be very serious.

Sleep apnea is a common disorder that can be very serious.

2. Sleep apnea can occur 20 to 30 times or more an hour. A pause that typically lasts 10–20 seconds or more.

Sleep apnea, a pause that typically lasts 10–20 seconds or more, can occur 20 to 30 times or

more an hour.

3. Moving out of deep sleep and into light sleep several times during the night, resulting in poor sleep quality.

Moving out of deep sleep and into light sleep several times during the night results in poor

sleep quality.

4. During sleep, enough air cannot flow into your lungs through your mouth and nose even though you try. To grasp a breath.

During sleep, enough air cannot flow into your lungs through your mouth and nose even

though you try to grasp a breath.

5. Your breathing may become hard and noisy and may even stop. For short periods of time (apneas).

Your breathing may become hard and noisy and may even stop for short periods of time.

Practice 13

FRAGMENTS

Proofread the following paragraph for fragments. Revise to eliminate fragments by combining or adding ideas.

How to Maintain Your Weight

(1) In order to stay at the same body weight, people must balance the amount of calories in the foods and drinks they consume, (2) ^{with} ~~With~~ the amount of calories the body uses. (3) Physical activity is one important way to use food energy. (4) Most Americans spend much of their working day in activities that require little energy. (5) In addition, many Americans of all ages now spend a lot of leisure time each day being inactive. (6) ^{for} ~~For~~ example, watching television or working at a computer. (7) To burn calories, devote less time to sedentary activities like sitting. (8) Spend more time in activities like walking to the store or around the block. (9) Use stairs rather than elevators. (10) Less sedentary activity and more vigorous activity may help you reduce body fat and disease risk. (11) Try to do 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity on most—preferably all—days of the week. (12) The kinds and amounts of food people eat affect their ability to maintain weight. (13) High-fat foods contain more calories per serving than other foods, (14) ^{which} ~~Which~~ may increase the likelihood of weight gain. (15) However, even when people eat less high-fat food, (16) ^{they} ~~They~~ still can gain weight from eating too many foods high in starch, sugars, or protein. (17) Eat a variety of foods, (18) ^{emphasizing} ~~Emphasizing~~ pasta, rice, bread, and other whole-grain foods as well as fruits and vegetables. (19) These foods are filling, but lower in calories than foods rich in fats or oils. (20) The pattern of eating may also be important. (21) Snacks provide a large percentage of daily calories for many Americans. (22) Unless nutritious snacks are part of the daily meal plan, (23) ^{snacking} ~~Snacking~~ may lead to weight gain. (24) A pattern of frequent binge eating, with or without alternating periods of food restriction, may also contribute to weight problems.

More practice correcting fragments:
<www.mywritinglab.com>



Adapted from “Balance the Food You Eat With Physical Activity—Maintain or Improve Your Weight.” Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans. U. S. Department of Agriculture. Dec. 1995.

Writing Assignments

Writing for Everyday Life

Read the following letter to a doctor requesting information. Edit to eliminate fragments.

Dear Dr. Alito:

Please send my records to the office of Dr. Alice Godbey. Who is currently treating me for a stress fracture in my right shin. Because your office ordered the x-rays of the injury. You must approve their release. Since you are my primary physician, Dr. Godbey's office will return the x-rays to your office. After my surgery.

Sincerely,

Sandra Acuri

Writing for College Life

Read the following paragraph written for a history class. Edit to eliminate fragments.

Sojourner Truth who was first known as Isabella Baumfree. Born a slave somewhere around 1797. While in slavery. She had five children with the man she married, Thomas Jeffery Harvey. Fleeing slavery around 1827. She left the country and lived in Canada. Isabella returned to New York. When the state abolished slavery in 1829. She worked with Elijah Pierson preaching on street corners for more than a decade. Later, she became a well-known speaker against slavery and for women's rights. She is still noted today. For her famous speech, "Ain't I a Woman."

Writing for Working Life

Read the following request for supplies in a department of a retail business. Edit to eliminate fragments.

To: Office Supply Department
 From: Customer Service Department
 Re: Order # 3214

According to our records. Our order for three computer desks, three computer chairs, and three filing cabinets was placed three weeks ago. At that time, you assured us that you would deliver this order promptly. Since our need was urgent. To meet the needs of our customers. We have added three new employees. Employees who began reporting to work two weeks ago. If these items are not delivered by the end of the week, I will refer this matter to your supervisor.



Academic Learning Log

WHAT HAVE I LEARNED ABOUT CORRECTING FRAGMENTS?

To test and track your understanding of correcting fragments, complete the following ideas. Use several sentences as needed for each response.

1. What are the two traits of a sentence?

A sentence states a complete and an independent thought and it contains a subject

and a verb.

2. A fragment is *an incomplete thought that is missing a subject, a verb, or both*

a subject and a verb.

3. A phrase is *a group of words that acts a single unit; a phrase does not have a*

subject or a verb.

4. A clause is *a set of words that contain a subject and a verb.*

5. Two types of clauses are *independent* and *dependent* clauses.

6. The five types of phrases discussed in this chapter include the *prepositional phrase*, *appositive phrase*, *infinitive phrase*, *gerund phrase*, and *participle phrase*.

7. Two ways to eliminate fragments include *joining* ideas or *adding* ideas.

8. **How will I use what I have learned?** In your notebook, discuss how you will apply to your own writing what you have learned about correcting fragments.

9. **What do I still need to study about fragments?** In your notebook, describe your ongoing study needs by describing what, when, and how you will continue studying fragments.