# FRAGMENTS

**By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:**

* Identify fragments.
* Correct fragments by completing the thought.

**Introduction**

As we have seen in the lessons on sentences and sentence structure, a complete sentence must have a subject and a verb.

**REMEMBER:** A complete statement or idea makes sense on its own. At a bare minimum, a sentence must have a subject (a person or thing that is being or doing something), and a predicate (something being done by the subject, or information about what the subject is / was / will be).

The subject of the sentence can be stated, or it can be “understood” – i.e. not stated explicitly, but able to be inferred from the context. This is the case with commands: “Be on time for the meeting” has the *implied* subject, “you”. In other words it is implied that “**YOU** must be on time for the meeting”.

But the statement, “Always comes to class late” is not a sentence because it really does not have a subject, and we can only guess who the subject might be. Here we are left asking ourselves, who always comes to class late?

A sentence thus expresses a **complete thought**. We do not have to ask questions to fully understand the statement.

An incomplete sentence is called a **fragment**. A fragment is either lacking a subject or verb, or it does not communicate a ***complete thought***. Here are some examples of sentence fragments:

* *Enjoyed the game last night.*

There is no subject.

* *My brother and sister*.

There is no verb.

* *Because all the food had been eaten*.

This does not communicate a complete thought.

When people write fragments in place of statements the reader is left asking ‘who, what, when, why’ etc. This oftentimes means that they are left more confused from reading your writing than before. This is what we are trying to avoid when writing! So remember, always complete your thoughts when writing sentences.

**Activity 1**

Read each group of words and decide whether it is a sentence. In the blank spaces, write *S* for sentence and *F* for fragment.

***Example:*** Came home late yesterday. F

1. He went to the beach. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Sang in the school choir. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. All my siblings and I. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. Singing loudly in the shower. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. Once they get here. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
6. Which school do you attend? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
7. Kept me up all night! \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
8. I enjoy writing. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
9. Meeting him at 11:00 am. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
10. She was really angry. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Activity 2**

Identify the sentences below that are fragments and need to be corrected. In the space provided, rewrite the fragment so it makes a complete thought. Note that not all of the sentences below need to be corrected. If the sentence is correct, then leave the space blank.

1. Weber distinguished between three kinds of authority.

1. One of the arms of government.

1. A system of decision-making based on the principle of majority rule.

1. The classical model of democracy is based on the city-state of Ancient Greece.
2. At the forum for African heads of state.