

SENTENCE FRAGMENTS

A sentence fragment is a group of words that “pretends” to be a sentence. Usually a fragment is missing an important word, such as a subject or verb. Sentence fragments are easy to recognize when they appear out of context:

On the old wooden stool in the corner of my grandmother’s kitchen. (missing a subject and verb)

And immediately popped their flares and life vests. (missing a subject)

Repairing Sentence Fragments

You can repair most fragments by:

- 1) pulling the fragment into a nearby sentence, or
- 2) turning the fragment into a sentence.

Fragment: On that morning I sat in my usual spot. *On the old wooden stool in the corner of my grandmother’s kitchen.*

Repaired: On that morning I sat in my usual spot, on the old wooden stool in the corner of my grandmother’s kitchen.

Fragment: The pilots ejected from the burning plane, landing in the water not far from the ship. *And immediately popped their flares and life vests.*

Repaired: The pilots ejected from the burning plane, landing in the water not far from the ship. They immediately popped their flares and life vests.

Exceptions

Writers occasionally use sentence fragments for special purposes.

For emphasis: “Following the Americanization of their children, even my parents grew more confident. *Especially my mother.* –Richard Rodriguez

To answer a question: Are these new drug tests reliable? *Not according to most experts.*

For Exclamations: *Not again!*

In advertising: *Fewer calories. Improved taste.*