



# Fragments

## Incomplete Sentences

Fragments are **incomplete sentences**, in which the independent clause is missing a subject, verb, or both. Occasionally you may see a dependent clause that contains a subject and verb and think it is a sentence, but it's not because it doesn't express a complete thought. In order for it to be a complete sentence, *an independent clause must contain a subject, predicate, and complete thought*.

## Missing Subjects

A subject is the *actor* in the sentence, who or what sentence is about.

The part of speech you are looking for in the subject is the **noun** (person, place, thing, or idea).

*Example Fragment:*

Fragment: Took a trip to the zoo.

Ask yourself: *Who or what* took a trip to a zoo?

Subject: The class.

**Complete sentence: The class took a trip to the zoo.**

## Missing Predicates

A predicate is the *action* in the sentence. The part of speech you are looking for in the predicate is the **verb**.

*Example Fragment:*

Fragment: The lady in the blue dress

Ask yourself: *What happens to* the lady in the blue dress?

Predicate: Walked quickly to the train station.

**Complete sentence: The lady in the blue dress walked quickly to the train station.**

## Test Yourself

In order to correct a fragment, you may need to omit punctuation, add punctuation, or combine with another thought to create a complete sentence. Try and revise the following sentences:

- 1) I went the Writing Center today. So many tutors to choose from.
- 2) A long essay to write.
- 3) Lewis University offers many clubs to join. Which is why I like going to school here.
- 4) Books thrown across the library.

**Writing Tip:** Read your paper out loud! It is easier to discover grammatical, stylistic, or structural errors when you hear how your ideas are arranged. At first, you may feel awkward, but this is a proofreading tool that will help you become a better writer!

**Further Assistance:** For more help with fragments, visit the Writing Center located in the Lewis University Library on the first floor in the LRC.