



The Writing Center

Directed Learning Activity



Fragments

Student name:

Date:

Instructor:

About This DLA

Important Note

All the activities in the DLA must be completed in their entirety before receiving credit for completion. Students are welcome to meet with a tutor if they need help, but please be aware that students might need a second appointment for review and signature in that case. If your instructor wants evidence of this completed DLA, they will be sent a spreadsheet at the start of each semester with all Writing Center appointments, indicating whether you have completed the DLA with a tutor or not. You can also access a summary of your appointment via EAB Navigate (please see the last section of this DLA, titled "Review the DLA").

Learning Outcomes

Through computer and other independent work, this activity will explain what fragments are and help you find and correct this common sentence error.

Activities (approximately 1 hour)

Read the information, complete the activities that follow, and be prepared to discuss your answers when you meet with a tutor.

DLA Video Review

If you would like to watch [a brief video that reviews parts of the Fragments DLA content](#), please use the QR code below:



Understanding Fragments

What is a sentence?

The basic elements necessary to create a complete sentence are a *subject* and *verb* (a complete thought). This subject and verb need to be placed within the appropriate sentence boundaries: start with capitalizing the first letter of the first word in the sentence, and end the sentence by placing a period (.) after the last word.

Example of a basic simple sentence: *Jim ran.*

The difficulty with sentence structure comes when you start adding more elements like prepositional phrases and descriptive words.

For example: *From a dead stop, aggravated by the less than interesting conversation, Jim ran away from the group of mind numbing people.*

Notice how much more difficult it is to identify the subject and verb of this sentence.

What is a fragment?

A sentence *fragment* occurs when a portion (or fragment) of a sentence is treated like a whole, complete sentence. For a group of words to be a complete sentence, it must have an independent clause with a subject and a verb. A fragment may be missing a subject, verb, or both. Also, a fragment does not make sense on its own.

Fragment examples:

- Going to the store.
- After I ate the entire cake.
- Ran the race.

Testing for Sentence Completeness

When you proofread your writing, look for patterns of errors that may develop in your writing. If you find (or already know) you have trouble with fragments, you can ask yourself the following questions to determine if you have a fragment:

1. Is there a subject?

A subject usually has a noun **or** noun phrase (person, place, or thing) that works with the verb. *If there is NO subject in your sentence, then you have a fragment.*

Examples of this type of error:

- *Raced to reach the whales.*
- *Studied all night for the test.*

In both of these examples, the sentences are missing subjects; to fix this type of error, you would need to add subjects to complete the sentences:

- ***The competitors*** *raced to reach the whales.*
- ***Hilary*** *studied all night for the test.*

2. Is there a verb?

Be sure you can identify the variety of verb types like static verbs and active verbs. Static verbs are the different forms of the "to be" verb. Active verbs are the verbs that we often call action words. *If there is NO verb in your sentence, then you have a fragment.*

Examples of this type of error:

- *Thousands of whales in the Arctic Ocean because of an early winter.*
- *Students in the hall since the beginning of class.*

In both of these examples, the sentences are missing verbs; add either static or active verbs to fix this type of error:

- *Thousands of whales **migrate** in the Arctic Ocean because of an early winter.*
- *Students **were waiting** in the hall since the beginning of class.*

3. Does the word group include a subordinating word AND lack an independent clause?

When you have a subordinating word, you are creating a subordinate (or dependent) clause or phrase. Dependent clauses and phrases must be attached to at least one independent clause. *If you have a subordinate clause or phrase that is not attached to an independent clause, you have a fragment.*

Examples of this type of error:

- *Because the ship intended to cut a path through the ice.*
- *Although the professor is nice.*

In both of these examples, the sentences are missing independent clauses; include a complete sentence to the dependent clause to fix this type of error:

- ***The captain had to quickly steer the ship** because the ship intended to cut a path through the ice.*
- *Although the professor is nice, **she can be very disorganized.***

For more subordinating conjunctions, refer to the "[How To Put Clauses Together](#)" handout and the column listed as "Subordinating Conjunctions."

Activities

Check off each box once you have completed the activity.

1. Online Quiz

Go to <http://tinyurl.com/FragmentsDLAQuiz>. and take the [Fragments DLA Quiz](#). Then complete the exercises on fragments. You must score at least 80% on the exercises before seeing a tutor. After you complete the task, **PLEASE ASK A LAB TUTOR OR FRONT DESK ATTENDANT TO PRINT THE PAGE THAT HAS YOUR SCORE. DO NOT EXIT THE PROGRAM UNTIL THIS PAGE HAS BEEN PRINTED (FREE OF CHARGE)**. If you have any other questions, do not hesitate to ask a lab tutor.

2. **Fragments Review**

Review the information above on fragments and answer the following question.

What is a fragment?

3. **Paragraph Correction**

Look at the paragraph that describes a first impression of a new environment and underline the fragments. Then, fixing each, write a revised paragraph on a separate sheet of paper or in a Word document.

Twenty-first century dating can be challenging. It is both harder and easier to meet new people. Because of online dating. Harder because not everyone online is genuine. However, it is easier to meet people since we can just swipe right or left and wait to be matched. Instead of having awkward encounters. Many people have had positive experiences with dating on apps or online. Some have even gotten married because of online dating. But for others. Like myself. Dating online has made it harder to connect with someone. Hard to determine what is real. Or if someone has exaggerated their profile. There are online daters who think that dating the 'old-fashioned' way is impossible. Whereas knowledgeable daters know that it is important to keep an open mind because someone just might surprise you. However, because of the unpredictability of dating in person. Many people would rather try online dating. I know that I will keep my options open because you never know when or where you will meet someone special.

Choose 4a or 4b Below

4a. **Correct Your Own Writing**

Before you begin this activity, collect some of your graded work, if possible, that identifies fragment errors. Correct all marked errors and look for others to correct as well.

If you do not have your own essay to work with, please complete the supplemental activity below (4b).

4b. **Sentence Correction**

In the following, put "F" if the element is a fragment and "C" if it is correct as it stands. If the sentence contains a fragment, make the correction.

1. Because the television is not working.

2. Hoping to get there on time.
3. Taylor Swift 11 Grammy awards.
4. Ramadan is observed by Muslims worldwide.
5. When I first got my car.
6. Although I have not finished my homework.
7. Wearing flared jeans is a current fad.
8. The dentist that I go to.
9. The watch which I got fixed has just stopped working.
10. Leaving the window open at night.

□ 5. Review the DLA

Go to <https://mtsac.campus.eab.com/> and use the [Mt. SAC Writing Center Appointment System](#) to make a DLA appointment either online or in-person in the Writing Center. During your session with a tutor, explain your understanding of the information you've learned so far. Consider the main concept you learned in this DLA and how you might use this in your future assignments/classes.

Sign-off procedure:

- Please review the **Appointment Summary Report** through your EAB appointment (under “my doc” on the desktop and phone app). This is where your in-center or dedicated writing specialist will indicate the **title of your DLA** and state whether you have **Completed it** or **Not Completed it**. These reports are sent automatically to your instructor on record; however, if there is an issue, please contact us at writingcenter@mtsac.edu or (909) 274-5325.

If you are an individual with a disability and need a greater level of accessibility for any document in The Writing Center or on The Writing Center's website, please contact the Mt. SAC Accessible Resource Centers for Students, access@mtsac.edu, (909) 274-4290.

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