



## Sentence Fragments

A **sentence fragment** is an incomplete piece of a sentence. It lacks one or more elements required for a *complete thought*: namely, a **SUBJECT** or **VERB**.

### Types of fragment mistakes:

➤ **Omitting a subject or a verb**

Example: Fragment NO

The apartment building with the mural on the side. (*This has a subject and its modifiers—missing a verb*).

Corrected version: YES

The apartment building, with the mural on the side, **burned** down.

➤ **Mistaking a prepositional or verb phrase for a sentence**

Example: Fragments NO

a. Will soon be sleeping. (*verb phrase—missing a subject*)

b. Inside the house. (*prepositional phrase—missing a subject and verb*)

Corrected versions: YES

a. The **baby** will soon be sleeping.

b. The missing **bracelet was found** inside the house.

➤ **Mistaking a dependent clause for a sentence** (*dependent clause: a group of words that needs another word or set of words to be a complete thought*)

Example: Fragment NO

After the candidates arrive. (*subject and verb are present, but this group of words is dependent on a main clause to express a complete thought its job is to explain or describe a main clause*)

Corrected version: YES

After the candidates arrive, **the mayoral debate will begin**.

Kelly, William J. and Deborah L. Lawton. *Odyssey: A Guide to Better Writing*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1998.