Grammar Workshop

Fragments & Run-ons

Avoid fragments!
- A sentence must have a subject and a verb and be a complete thought! Otherwise, it's a fragment.
  - Fishing is one of the oldest sports. And can be one of the most relaxing.
  - Fishing is one of the oldest sports and can be one of the most relaxing.

Avoid run-on errors.
- Run-on sentences occur when two or more sentences run together, making it difficult for the reader to follow.
- These are all run-ons:
  - I took out the trash last night now it’s your turn.
  - I took out the trash last night, now it’s your turn.
  - I took out the trash last night and now it’s your turn.

Run-on Fixes
- Just making the run-on into two sentences isn’t always the best solution.
- Instead, caution your reader to slow down for a second but then to keep reading.
  - If the period is a red light, think of the semicolon as a yellow light – it slows down the reader but doesn’t require a full stop.

Direct your reader ...

Red light – full stop:
- Use a period:
  - I took out the trash last night. Now it’s your turn.

Yellow light – (caution) slow down:
- Use a semicolon between two sentences that you want the reader to read together:
  - I took out the trash last night; now it’s your turn.

Direct your reader ...

Red light – full stop:
- Use a period:
  - I took out the trash last night. Now it’s your turn.

Yellow light – (caution) slow down:
- Use a comma between two sentences joined by a coordinating conjunction:
  - I took out the trash last night, but now it’s your turn.
Coordinating Conjunctions

- For
- And
- Nor
- But
- Or
- Yet
- So

There are only 7 coordinating conjunctions (FANBOYS).

Jay sent me, for he can’t be here himself.

Jay sent me, and I’m not sure where to go.

Jay sent me, so here I am!

Jay sent me, or at least that’s what the email told me.

Direct your reader!

- Say what you mean to say – completely.
- Be sure what you write makes sense logically (subject and verb agree).
- Direct your reader so that you control your message!