Grammar Workshop

Fragments:
Pretenders – Not Really Sentences

A Fragment . . .
- is a piece of a sentence
- is not a complete thought
- may be missing a subject or verb

Beware of the pretender!
It may -
- begin with a capital letter
- and have a subject and verb,

. . . but a fragment is not a complete thought!

Example
- Missing a subject
  Just watching T.V. and eating pizza.

  To repair, add a subject!
  My brother and I were just watching T.V. and eating pizza.

Example
- Missing a verb.
  Jane, Kim, and several other girls from high school.

  To repair, add a verb!
  Jane, Kim, and several other girls from high school met for lunch last week.

Example: Incomplete thought
- A fragment may start with a preposition.
  Steve went for a long walk. On the beach.
Example: Incomplete thought

- A fragment may start with a subordinate conjunction.

I was angry. **Because** my boyfriend didn't call me.

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Example: Incomplete thought

**Example subordinate conjunctions:**

after, although, as, because, before, though, if, unless, until, when, while

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Example: Incomplete thought

- A fragment may start with an **-ing** verb form.

He stayed up very late. **Reading** a good book.

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Example: Incomplete thought

- A fragment may start with an infinitive ("to" and a verb)

Julie called the vet. **To tell** him that Rover was ill.

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Example: Incomplete thought

- A fragment may start with words like "for example."

Eric throws tantrums. **For example,** kicking and screaming.

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One way to repair

**Repair by attaching the fragment to another complete thought.**

- Steve went for a long walk on the beach.
- I was angry because my boyfriend didn't call me.
- Julie called the vet to tell him that Rover was ill.
Another way to repair

*Repair by making a new sentence with its own subject and verb.*
- He stayed up very late. He was reading a good book.
- Eric throws tantrums. For example, he kicks and screams.

Check yourself!

- Is it a sentence?
  - Does it have a subject?
  - Does it have a verb?
  - Is it a complete thought?

Fix it!

The answer must be “Yes” to all of these questions. If the answer is “No” to one of the questions, you have a fragment.

Repair by -
- attaching to another complete thought
- making the fragment a sentence