

What is a sentence?

To be correct and complete, a sentence must contain several key elements. For example, the following sentence is correct and complete:

Humber students study in a wide range of specialty programs.

However, the following phrases are not correct sentences because they are missing one of the required elements:

- Applied for the Early Childhood Education program.
- Jinho, a student in the Landscaping program.
- Humber students study in a wide range of specialty programs

By looking at each incorrect example above, we can determine what is required for a phrase to become a complete sentence.

- The first example, “Applied for the Early Childhood Education program.” is missing a subject.
- The second example, “Jinho, a student in the Landscaping program.” is missing a verb.
- Because they are missing a subject or a verb, the first and second examples are not complete thoughts.
- The third EX: “Humber students study in a wide range of specialty programs” is missing correct punctuation—a period.

Therefore, we can conclude that a complete sentence must have a subject, a verb, a complete thought, and correct punctuation.

SENTENCE FRAGMENTS

What is a sentence fragment?

A sentence fragment is a phrase that looks like a sentence, but is missing a subject, a verb, a complete thought, or correct punctuation. The three sentences listed on the previous page are examples of fragments.

Using some of the words from the following lists (or other words if you prefer), write your own examples of sentence fragments and explain why they are incorrect (what they are missing).

Toronto, the woman on the train, the Prime Minister, my old laptop,
the new reality program, our family, the neighbors' new puppy,
a gold earring, a guitar, English

to visit, to study, to watch, to walk, to cost, to fall, to talk, to understand, to be,
to have, to buy, to disappear, to decide, to travel

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Correcting sentence fragments

Once you have identified a sentence fragment, you can correct it by adding what is missing. For example, the following phrase is a sentence fragment that doesn't have a verb:

The new movie at the mall.

So, by adding a verb, we can make it a complete and correct sentence:

The new movie is playing at the mall.

Now, correct the fragments you wrote on the previous page by adding what was missing from each one.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____