

Mullins

Fragments

1. Fragmented phrases

Bozo the clown.

Threw the ball to Brunhilda.

What's wrong with the two sentences above? The first one contains no action. What is Bozo doing? The second sentence has an action, but it's not clear who's doing it. In order for a sentence to be complete it must contain a **subject** and a **verb**. The **subject** is the noun or pronoun that performs the action in the sentence and the **verb** is the action that is performed.

***Bozo** the clown **threw** the ball to Brunhilda.*

In the above sentence, "Bozo" is the subject and "threw" is the verb. If a sentence is missing a subject or a verb, then it is known as a fragment.

2. Subordinate clauses

When Bozo the clown threw the ball to Brunhilda.

This sentence above is a fragment. What happened when Bozo threw the ball? More information is needed to make the idea complete. The sentence above is what is known as a subordinate clause. A subordinate clause needs to be connected to a main clause with a comma to make it a complete sentence.

*When Bozo the clown threw the ball to Brunhilda, **she smiled**.*

Subordinate clauses are always introduced by subordinating conjunctions, words that start a subordinate clause. Here's a partial list of words that commonly introduce subordinate clauses:

after	if	when
although	since	where
as	that	whether
because	though	which
before	unless	while
even though	until	who

3. Verbals

*Bozo the clown **throwing** the ball to Brunhilda.*

The above sentence is not a complete sentence. The reason is that "throwing" is not a verb. -ing verbs always require some sort of helping verb, such as *is* or *was*.

*Bozo the clown **is throwing** the ball to Brunhilda.*

When a verb ends in *-ing* and doesn't have a helping verb, then it is a verbal. Verbals look like verbs, but are actually nouns or adjectives.

as a noun: ***Running** can help reduce heart disease.*

as an adjective: *The **running** river roared.*

So if a verb ends in *-ing* and doesn't have a helping verb, then it is actually a verbal. Don't mistake verbals for actual verbs.

Fragments Exercise

name:

Repair any fragment by attaching it to a nearby sentence or by rewriting it as a complete sentence. If a word group is correct, write "correct" after it.

- a. The shock of bereavement is often followed by a succession of emotions. Denial, sorrow, anger, despair, guilt, remorse, and longing.

 - b. Cortés and his soldiers were astonished when they looked down from the mountains and saw Tenochtitlán. The magnificent capital of the Aztecs.

 - c. Although my spoken Spanish is not very good. I can read the language with ease.

 - d. There are several reasons for not eating meat. One reason being that dangerous chemicals are used throughout the various stages of meat production.

 - e. To give my family a comfortable, secure home life. That is my most important goal.
1. The panther lay quite motionless behind the rock. Waiting silently for its prey.

 2. Mother loved to play all our favorite games. Canasta, Monopoly, hide-and-seek, and even kick-the-can.

 3. With machetes, the explorers cut their way through the tall grasses to the edge of the canyon. Then they began to lay out the tapes for the survey.

 4. The geologists were interested in visiting the Seychelles. The only midocean islands in the world that are formed of granite.

 5. If a woman from the desert tribe showed anger toward her husband, she was whipped in front of the whole village. And shunned by the rest of the women.