



Illinois Valley Community College
Writing Center

FIXING FRAGMENTS

Sentence fragments occur when the sentence is missing a vital part, such as a subject or a verb. Because of this missing part, the sentence's meaning is incomplete.

Fragment Patterns

1. A fragment sometimes begins with a preposition or a conjunctive adverb. Some common words and phrases that appear in these fragments are *although, if, before, that, so that, though, unless, who, where, which, when, instead of, and therefore*.

Troy Maxon discourages his son Cory from trying to play college football. *Although* Troy himself was a professional baseball player.

As part of his plan to trick Othello, Iago takes the handkerchief. *That* Desdemona had dropped on the ground.

2. A fragment sometimes begins with an *-ing* verb.

The town officials go to Emily's house and demand that she start to pay taxes. *Forgetting* the agreement that was made by Colonel Sartoris years ago.

3. A fragment may be missing a subject or a verb.

Mother revolts by moving the family's furniture into the new barn. *Refuses* to live in her shabby house any longer.

Montresor plans his crime during carnival season. *A time* of parties and costumes.

Correcting Fragments

The middle sentence in this passage is a fragment, which can be corrected by adding the necessary part or combining with another complete sentence

Helmer treats Nora like she is a child. *Calling her pet names*. He acts more like a father than a husband.

1. Connect the fragment to the sentence that comes before or after (using necessary punctuation).

Helmer treats Nora like she is a child **and** calls her pet names.
By calling her pet names, **he** acts more like a father than a husband.

2. Add the missing part (subject or verb) to the fragment.

Helmer treats Nora like she is a child. **He** calls her pet names.