

Name: _____
Date: _____
Period: _____

Sentence Fragments

A sentence fragment is a group of words that is only a part of a sentence. Since a fragment is not the whole thing, it won't be as useful to you as it could be. Just as a fragment of a bowl can't hold much food, a fragment of a sentence may not communicate what you want to say.

To be complete, a sentence must have (1) a subject, (2) a verb, and (3) express a complete thought. If any of these pieces are missing, the group of words is a fragment rather than a complete sentence.

FRAGMENT	Is one of the largest snakes. [The subject is missing. <i>What</i> is one of the largest snakes?]
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SENTENCE	The anaconda is one of the largest snakes.
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FRAGMENT	Anacondas to a length of thirty feet. [The verb is missing. <i>What</i> do they do to a length of thirty feet?]
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SENTENCE	Anacondas can grow to a length of thirty feet.
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FRAGMENT	Although these snakes aren't poisonous. [This has a subject and a verb, but it doesn't express a complete thought.]
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SENTENCE	Although these snakes aren't poisonous, their size makes them dangerous.
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To find out if what you've written is a fragment, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Does the group of words have a subject?
2. Does the group of words have a verb?
3. Does the group of words express a complete thought?

If even one of your answers is "no," then you have a fragment.