

**SENTENCE FRAGMENTS**

7a A *sentence* is a group of words that expresses a complete thought.

7b A *sentence fragment* is a group of words that does not express a complete thought. The fragment should not be punctuated as if it were a sentence.

FRAGMENT Carefully broke the egg into the bowl. [The subject is missing. *Who broke the egg?*]

SENTENCE The child carefully broke the egg into the bowl.

FRAGMENT The first frog of the year. [The verb is missing. *What about the frog?*]

SENTENCE The first frog of the year hopped at the edge of the puddle.

FRAGMENT Where some birds became the first humans. [This word group has a subject and a verb but doesn't express a complete thought. *What about the birds?*]

SENTENCE According to Tibetan stories, a mountain in Tibet is the place where some birds became the first humans.



NOTE

Sometimes a fragment is really a part of the sentence that comes before or after it. You can correct the fragment by attaching it to the sentence it belongs to.

FRAGMENT Snow never falls in the Bahamas. **Because the islands are so close to the equator.**

SENTENCE Snow never falls in the Bahamas because the islands are so close to the equator.

**EXERCISE 1 Recognizing Fragments**

On the line before each of the following groups of words, write *sent.* if the group is a sentence or *frag.* if the group is a sentence fragment.

EX. sent. 1. The bicycle had heavy-duty tires

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. How did Joey fix the headphones

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. To make a Christmas pudding

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. He walked carefully at the edge of the cliff

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. Nearly lost his balance and fell

- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The salamander under the leaves
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Where did you hide the presents
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Dropped the ball but recovered it
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Don't lean against the garage wall
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Bought new high-tops with her own money
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Whenever I raise my hand in class
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Wash your hands
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Played with older children
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. At school, I took apart an old television set
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Pedro loves to fly kites
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Will be a crossing guard this fall

## EXERCISE 2 Revising Fragments

On your own paper, rewrite each sentence fragment below to make it a complete sentence. Add a subject, add a verb, or attach the fragment to a complete sentence.

- EX. 1. Left the scooter outside in the rain  
1. Tillie left the scooter outside in the rain.
- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. After Tova finished the race   | 11. When the lights went out           |
| 2. In my top desk drawer          | 12. My cocker spaniel, Rolfe           |
| 3. Because I did not have a key   | 13. Some paintings by my sister Tia    |
| 4. Playing drums in the orchestra | 14. Loves swimming                     |
| 5. Had great seats for the circus | 15. In plain view                      |
| 6. On a tour of the fire station  | 16. Two electric guitars               |
| 7. Where no human could survive   | 17. Flying above the pines             |
| 8. A space mission to Mars        | 18. Some cartoons in the Sunday paper  |
| 9. Wrestling with his papa        | 19. Building a set for the school play |
| 10. A large and hungry dinosaur   | 20. Sprang up overnight                |