
Grammar Basics

What Makes a Complete Sentence?

- In order for a sentence to be considered complete, it must have a subject, a verb, and it must make a complete thought. Eg. I slept all night long.
- A sentence without a complete thought is a fragment. Fragments rarely make sense and can often confuse the reader. Eg. Under the bed.

Forms of punctuation and when to use them.

- Commas: You will use a comma to break up words or ideas. Eg. Let's eat, kids. Commas are also used to separate items in a list, connecting two ideas with a coordinating conjunction (But, and, for, etc.).
- Semicolons: Semicolons are used to join two closely related clauses without the use of a conjunction. Eg. I missed the bus; I guess I'm walking to school.

What is a run-on sentence and how can you fix it?

- A run-on sentence is a sentence consisting of two or more complete thoughts that are not separated by punctuation or other methods. Eg. I was hungry I ate lunch.
- There are many ways to fix this sentence. You can fix it using punctuation, such as a semicolon or period. Eg. I was hungry. I ate lunch. OR I was hungry; I ate lunch.
- Run-ons can also be fixed by using a comma and conjunction. Eg. I was hungry, so I ate lunch.

Tense Shifts and How To Avoid Shifting Unnecessarily

- One of the most difficult aspects of writing is making sure everything lines up in terms of tense. If something was being written in past tense, it would look something like this: I wrote this piece.
- If something is being done currently, it would look like this: I am writing this piece.
- If something is going to be done, it would look like this: I will write this piece.

One way to avoid this is by reading your work out loud. By reading your work out loud, you may be able to pick up on things like unnecessary tense shifts and even run-on sentences.
