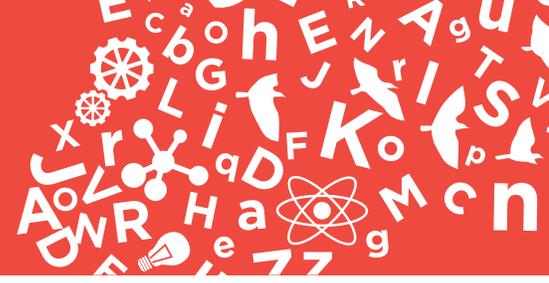


# LESSON 3: SENTENCE STRUCTURE



## Subject/Predicate

*Subject:* The something or someone that the sentence is about.

*Predicate:* Contains information about the subject.

## Sentence Types

- *Simple:* Contains a single, independent clause.
- *Compound:* Contains two independent clauses that are joined by a coordinating conjunction. (The most common coordinating conjunctions are: but, or, and, so. Remember: boas.)
- *Complex:* Contains an independent clause plus one or more dependent clauses. (A dependent clause starts with a subordinating conjunction. Examples: that, because, while, although, where, if.)
- *Compound-complex:* Contains 3 or more clauses (of which at least two are independent and one is dependent).
  - ↳ I don't like dogs, and my sister doesn't like cats because they make her sneeze.
  - ↳ You can write on paper, but using a computer is better as you can easily correct your mistakes.
  - ↳ A tree fell onto the school roof in a storm, but none of the students was injured, although many of them were in classrooms at the top of the building.

**Tip:** Alternate the type of sentence structures you use to give your writing a balanced and natural flow.

## Problematic "Sentences"

- *Run-on sentences:* These are two sentences that the writer has not separated with an end punctuation mark, or has not joined with a

conjunction.

**Tip:** *It is helpful to read your written work aloud. When you speak, you will make natural pauses to mark the end of your sentences or clauses. If there is no corresponding end punctuation mark in your writing, you can be almost certain that you have written a run-on sentence.*

- **Sentence fragments:** Fragment sentences are unfinished sentences, i.e. they don't contain a complete idea. A common fragment sentence in student writing is a dependent clause standing alone without an independent clause.

**Tip:** *If your "sentence" is a dependent clause, or it doesn't contain both a subject and a predicate, then it is not a proper sentence. You can often detect fragments if you read your writing backwards sentence by sentence, i.e. from the last sentence to the first one. You can usually correct a fragment by connecting it to the sentence before or after it.*

- **Rambling sentences:** A rambling sentence is a sentence made up of many clauses, often connected by a coordinating conjunction such as and, or, so.

**Tip:** *You have almost certainly written one if your sentence contains more than 3 or 4 conjunctions. If you read the sentence aloud and run out of breath before reaching the end of it, you have written a rambling sentence. If your sentence stretches over many lines of writing, you have certainly written a rambling sentence and most probably a run-on sentence too.*



## CHALLENGE

Write a paragraph describing your day using run-ons, fragments, and rambling sentences. Then, go back and edit your paragraph by constructing proper sentences.

Email your challenge to [laurelnakai@gmail.com](mailto:laurelnakai@gmail.com) by Oct 10