

Week 12: Sentence Fragments / Run-On Sentences

Prior Knowledge-Sentence fragments and run-on sentences were introduced in the Grade 3 DLI materials and will continue to be developed for several years. This skill is supported by your students' increasing skill levels in recognizing complete sentences.

Lesson Focus-Students will learn about the following incorrect structures.

Sentence fragments do not express a complete thought, and they are missing important information.

Run-on sentences are created when two separate sentences are connected without punctuation or a connecting word.

Lesson Strategies-"The Decision Point" Students have already been exposed to some fragments and run-on sentences in editing paragraphs in Weeks 1-11. These items provided review for this skill following its introduction in Grade 3. Support for students has been provided since a capital letter has been placed in the middle of the sentence at the *decision point*.

Now in Week 12, you will guide conversations with students as they decide if a complete thought follows the capitalized letter. If so, two complete sentences are needed. If the thought is not complete, the words following the capital letter are still part of the original sentence.

Use Examples 1 and 2 below for your mini-lesson.

Ex 1: Jonas had been saving for a soccer ball He knew which one he wanted.

The decision point is underlined. Instruct students to read the words following He to decide if the words express a complete thought. Suggested Think Alouds: "Is there a subject and a predicate?" (yes) "How many sentences or how many complete thoughts do you find?" (two) "If these words are a complete thought, what punctuation would be needed after soccer ball? (a period)

Ex 2: The spelling bee participant concentrated. And closed her eyes.

Read the words *And closed her eyes*. Suggested Think Alouds: "Is there a subject and a predicate?" (no) "Do these words express a complete thought?" (no) "Should *And closed her eyes* be included in the original sentence?" (yes) "How many sentences or complete thoughts do you find?" (one) "What punctuation and capitalization changes would be needed to make it correct?" (Eliminate the period and make the first letter of *And* lower case.)

Ex 3: Many birds migrate south for the winter months they make the long journey back in the spring.

This type of run-on sentence does not have any capitalization or punctuation clues and is the most common type of run-on sentence. Students need to recognize that two completely separate ideas are expressed, and each one is a complete sentence. This type of item is the most difficult and will continue to be developed in subsequent years of instruction. The Day Three Teacher-Directed task provides an introduction for this lesson.