**Module:** foreign language **(English)**

**1st lecture**

**Sentence Fragment**

a sentence fragment is a clause that falls short of true sentence-hood because it is missing one of three critical components: a subject, a verb, and a complete thought.

We often fail to recognize our sentence fragments because our incomplete thoughts can easily masquerade as sentences. All a series of words needs is a capital at the beginning and ending punctuation and It looks like a sentence. Yet, for a sentence to be truly complete, it must contain an independent clause, which tells the whole story even when isolated from its context.

**Sentence Fragment Examples**

Here is a glaring example of a sentence fragment:

EX: Because of the rain.

On its own, “because of the rain” doesn’t form a complete thought. It leaves us wondering what happened because of the rain. To complete it, we need further explanation:

Ex: Because of the rain, the party was cancelled.

Now the fragment has become a dependent clause attached to a sentence that has a subject (the party) and a verb (was cancelled). Our thought is complete.

In that example, making the sentence longer was the solution. But that doesn’t mean that short sentences can’t be complete. This teensy sentence is complete:

Ex: I ran.

“I ran” may be a short thought, but it has a subject (I) and a verb (ran). Nothing in the sentence demands further explanation.

**Mending Sentence Fragments**

Fixing a sentence fragment involves one of two things: giving it the components it lacks or fastening it onto an independent clause. Consider the following:

Ex: There are many ways to frighten little brothers; for example, you could hide under their beds and wait for dark.

Notice that in order to properly connect these two clauses with a semicolon (;), you need to do some rewriting in order to ensure both can function as independent clauses. In other words, you need to fortify the fragment with a subject and a verb to turn it into a sentence. Notice in the example above that by doing so, you’ll need to edit other parts of your fragment to turn it into a grammatically correct independent clause.

If a semicolon seems too formal for your purposes, you could write your text as two sentences—but don’t forget to make sure the second one has a subject and a verb:

Ex: There are many ways to frighten little brothers. For example, you could hide under their beds and wait for dark.

Both remedies result in structurally sound sentences.

**Stylistic Sentence Fragments**

Without question, you should avoid sentence fragments in formal situations and academic writing. That said, a fragment within a clear context can sometimes serve a valid dramatic purpose. Journalists, bloggers, and fiction writers often use them. For example:

As always, judge for yourself who your audience is and how much freedom you have for breaking the rules. If you are telling a story, a few fragments might suit your purpose and style well, but if you are writing an essay or crafting a business document, it’s best not using them.