

Quick Clues to English

LBCC Developmental Studies

RECOGNIZING AND CORRECTING FRAGMENTS

Sometimes a group of words may look like a sentence, but the sentence is incomplete. A *sentence fragment* is an incomplete sentence. A fragment may be missing a subject, a verb, or both, or it may be a dependent clause without an independent clause.

All sentences must have a *subject* and a *verb* and *be able to stand on their own*.

CHECKING FOR FRAGMENTS

Make sure that every sentence has at least one independent clause: a subject-verb set that can stand alone.

CORRECTING FRAGMENTS

1. You may need to add a *subject*.

Example: Wading off the shore at dusk. (fragment)

We waded off the shore at dusk. (corrected)

or

We were wading off the shore at dusk. (corrected)

or

Wading off the shore at dusk, we saw a grey whale. (corrected)

2. You may need to add a *verb*.

Example: The CPT, the college placement test used to assess new students. (fragment)

The CPT is a college placement test used to assess new students. (corrected)

3. You may need to either add an independent clause or take off the connecting word (subordinating conjunction).

Example: Before I took my Math 65 test yesterday. (fragment)

I took my Math 65 test yesterday. (corrected)

or

Before I took my Math 65 test yesterday, I went to the Math Help Desk. (corrected)