Fragments

Each sentence should carry one complete thought. Fragments express thoughts incompletely, usually relying on context to convey the complete meaning. To determine if you’ve written a sentence fragment, apply the following test to your prospective sentence:

1. Ask: is there a verb? If not, it is a fragment.
2. Ask: is there a subject? If not, it is a fragment.
3. Ask: is the word group a subordinate (or dependent) clause or phrase? If so, it is a fragment.

If you determine you’ve written a fragment, you can revise by

- **Attaching that fragment to an adjacent sentence;**

  Example:

  Incorrect: On that morning I sat in my usual spot. On the old wooden stool in my grandmother’s kitchen.

  ☺ Correct: On that morning I sat in my usual spot, on the old wooden stool in my grandmother’s kitchen.

- **Or, by turning that fragment into a sentence.**

  Example:

  Incorrect: The pilots ejected from the burning plane. And immediately popped their flares and life vests.

  ☺ Correct: The pilots ejected from the burning plane. They immediately popped their flares and life vests.