Common Sentence Problems
Run-on or Fused Sentences,
Comma Splices, and Sentence Fragments

Run-on or Fused Sentences

A **run-on or fused sentence** is the result of joining two independent clauses without using punctuation or a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS: *for*, *and*, *nor*, *but*, *or*, *yet*, or *so*). Run-on sentences are usually corrected in one of the following ways:

- Form two separate sentences by adding a period between the two independent clauses
- Add a comma before the coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS: *for*, *and*, *nor*, *but*, *or*, *yet*, or *so*)
- Add a semicolon between the two independent clauses
- Change the comma to a semicolon and add a conjunctive adverb
- Subordinate one of the independent clauses

Incorrect:	William Shakespeare lived in London he wrote Romeo and Juliet. (Run-on or fused sentence)
Correct:	William Shakespeare lived in London**. He** wrote Romeo and Juliet.
	William Shakespeare lived in London**, and** he wrote Romeo and Juliet.
	William Shakespeare lived in London**;** he wrote Romeo and Juliet.
	William Shakespeare lived in London**; additionally,** he wrote Romeo and Juliet.
	William Shakespeare wrote Romeo and Juliet **while** he lived in London.

Comma Splices

A **comma splice** is the result of joining two independent clauses incorrectly with a comma only. Comma splices usually can be corrected in one of the following ways:

- Form two separate sentences by changing the comma to a period
- Add a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS: *for*, *and*, *nor*, *but*, *or*, *yet*, or *so*) after the comma
- Replace the comma with a semicolon
- Change the comma to a semicolon and add a conjunctive adverb
- Subordinate one of the independent clauses

Incorrect:	I enjoyed the movie, it was very entertaining. (Comma splice)
Correct:	I enjoyed the movie**. It** was very entertaining.
	I enjoyed the movie**, and** it was very entertaining.
	I enjoyed the movie**;** it was very entertaining.
	I enjoyed the movie**; moreover,** it was very entertaining.
	I enjoyed the movie **because** it was very entertaining.

Sentence Fragments

A **sentence fragment** is a group of words that is punctuated as if it were a complete sentence but is grammatically incomplete because it lacks a subject or a predicate or begins with a subordinating clause. A sentence fragment lacks a complete thought. Sentence fragments can usually be corrected in one of the following ways:

- Add the missing phrase or words
- Attach the sentence fragment to the preceding sentence if the fragment agrees with the context of the preceding sentence.

Incorrect:	Fits perfectly! (No subject)
Correct:	The dress fits perfectly! (Sentence)
Incorrect:	The white dog. (No verb)
Correct:	The white dog is covered in mud. (Sentence)
Incorrect:	That I found in the hall. (Subordinate clause)
Correct:	The hat that I found in the hall was blue. (Sentence)
Incorrect:	The dress I am wearing to the ball is red. Fits perfectly! (A sentence and a fragment)
Correct:	The red dress I am wearing to the ball fits perfectly. (*Fits perfectly!* is integrated into the preceding sentence.)