COMMA SPLICE

Comma splices join two complete sentences (clauses) with a comma. A comma alone CANNOT join two sentences.

How do we know we have a comma splice??

Joey went to the grocery store, he needed to buy eggs for supper.

- This sentence is incorrect because “Joey went to the grocery store” and “he needed to buy eggs for supper” are both complete sentences.

There are five main methods of fixing commas splices:

1. We can separate the two clauses into two sentences by replacing the comma with a period.

   Joey went to the grocery store. He needed to buy eggs for supper.

2. We can replace the comma with a semi-colon.

   Joey went to the grocery store; he needed to buy eggs for supper.

3. We can replace the comma with a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, for, yet, nor, or so).

   Joey went to the grocery store, for he needed to buy eggs for supper.

   - Each of these words implies a relationship, so be careful that you retain the meaning of the sentence when you use these conjunctions. Note also that usually you need to place a comma before the conjunction.

4. We can replace the comma with a subordinating conjunction (e.g., after, although, before, unless, as, because, even though, if, since, until, when, while).

   Joey went to the store because he needed to buy eggs for supper.

5. Replace the comma with a semi-colon and transitional word (e.g., however, moreover, on the other hand, nevertheless, instead, also, therefore, consequently, otherwise, as a result).

   Joey did not go to the store; as a result, he needed to buy eggs for supper.

   - Note: You need to place a semi-colon before the transitional word, and a comma after the word.