Microlab #4 Complete Sentences

This microlab will help you:
- understand the definition of complete sentences
- recognize sentence fragments
- repair sentence fragments

Review of Complete Sentences

Being able to recognize and write complete sentences is one of the most important skills in writing.

Recognizing a Sentence—a complete sentence always has a subject and a predicate and expresses at least one complete thought.

White clouds dotted the horizon.

subject + predicate = sentence

I. A sentence must have a subject. Subjects name people, places, things, ideas, and activities. Most subjects do something in a sentence or describe an action.

Mr. Johnson painted the house yellow.
Far beneath us lay the Fiji Islands.
Puzzles fascinated Sally.
On July 4, freedom takes a bow.
It is orange and red.

II. A sentence must have a predicate. A predicate describes what the subject does or is. The verb within each complete predicate is italicized.

Jennifer tickled the cow’s ear.
The fan spun dizzily overhead.
Rumors spread quickly.
Ted is allergic to ink.
The moon was high in the sky.

III. A sentence must express a complete thought.

Incomplete thought: Because I was in a hurry.
Complete thought: I ran because I was in a hurry.
Incomplete thought: That I want.
Complete thought: She bought the shoes that I want.

IV. The sentence must have the verb correctly formed? Some sentence fragments have both a subject and a predicate, but the verb is formed correctly.

Sentence fragment: Jack waving. (Waving cannot stand alone as a verb)

Complete sentence: Jack is waving.

V. Recognizing Sentence Fragments:
Sentence fragments are incomplete sentences. Guard against them in your own writing. With the addition of missing predicates or subjects, the sentences become complete.

Key Points to Remember
- Every sentence must have a subject.
- Every sentence needs a predicate.
- Every sentence must have a complete thought.
- The verb must be formed correctly.