

Lesson 3

Adjusting to Structure

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Exercise A

Read the two paragraphs below with the purpose of understanding the main points of each. Put a check in front of the paragraph that you read more rapidly.

(A) _____ What is the responsibility of contemporary lexicographers (dictionary makers)? The successors of Noah Webster are enmeshed in a controversy. Some would maintain that lexicographers should condemn without qualification such words as *ain't*, while others argue that a lexicographer has nothing to do with deciding which words and expressions are right and which are wrong but only with citing current usages.

(B) _____ What is the duty of today's dictionary writers? The people who have followed in the footsteps of Noah Webster are involved in a debate. Some think that dictionaries should not include such words as *ain't*. Others disagree. They think dictionary writers shouldn't decide whether words and expressions are right or wrong. They should only report the way people actually use language.

1. Which paragraph has longer, more complicated sentences?

2. Which paragraph were you able to understand more easily?

3. Which paragraph did you have to read more carefully?

Both paragraphs say about the same thing, but you were probably able to read paragraph B more rapidly. When a selection contains sentences that are long and complicated, your method of reading must be a careful one, and your rate of reading must be slow. To be a flexible reader, you must adjust your rate (slow, normal, fast) and method (careful reading, normal reading, or skimming) to your purpose and to the difficulty of words and sentences.

Look over the two selections on the next page to get an idea of their difficulty. Then read the articles, adjusting your rate and method to the difficulty of the material. Try to understand and remember the *main* points and the *important* details.

She was the first woman to seek the American presidency.

VICTORIA WOODHULL: INDEPENDENT THINKER

by Marion Meade

Victoria Woodhull ran for president of the United States in 1872. In an age when females were thought too ignorant even to vote, the notion of a woman president had sufficient power to shock most people. It was a revolutionary idea.

Perhaps others before her had shared the dream; if so, they never dared to expose themselves to ridicule. Any kind of worldly ambition was thought to be unnatural for a woman. America had been founded as a democracy with liberty and justice for all, but the question of who shall lead and who shall follow had been determined at the outset. Indeed, it had never even been debated. Politics was deemed a suitable occupation only for men.

A woman with political ambitions kept them to herself. If she were extraordinarily lucky, she might marry a man who would someday win the highest office and then she could be the First Lady. To wish for more was madness and delusion.

No doubt Victoria Woodhull was a bit odd. She rudely violated conventional ideas of what was proper behavior for a woman. Whether as presidential nominee, radical feminist, stockbroker, newspaper editor, public speaker, or divorced woman, Victoria Woodhull gloried in her independence. When she aimed for the White House, it was not an empty gesture. She meant business.

Because she happened to be an extraordinarily beautiful woman and a compelling speaker, people were sufficiently impressed to look, listen, and read about her. Her contemporaries may not have liked her, but they couldn't ignore her.

She overcame hardships to become a leading educator.

MARY McLEOD BETHUNE: TIRELESS WORKER

by Mary W. Burgess

A loud cry came from the tiny black baby. It was July 10, 1875. "She is born free!" exclaimed Patsy McLeod.

Years later Mary Jane's mother was doing washing for a white family. One morning, Mary Jane was standing silently while her mother talked with her employer. A small white child ran up with a book in her hand, and finding her mother busy, she turned to Mary Jane.

"Read me this story, Mary Jane," the child said.

Her older sister snatched the book away. "*She* can't read!" she said scornfully.

On the way home, Mary Jane pulled at her mother's dress, saying, "I want to learn to read!"

Patsy McLeod glanced down at the eager face.

"No schools for coloreds around here," she answered. "But—the teacher and the school will come some day."

The sight of that book had made a deep impression on Mary Jane. She

could not get it out of her mind. She dreamed of it as she helped her father plant cotton.

"Mary's as strong as an ox," her neighbors would say. "And smart, too."

"Mary has a risin' soul," her mother said proudly. "She will go far or break her heart."

Mary McLeod did go far. She went to school and became a teacher. After her marriage to Albertus Bethune, she started a school for black girls. It later became Bethune-Cookman College, and she was its president from 1923 to 1947. She was a special advisor to President Franklin Roosevelt and the first black woman to head a government agency. She started the National Council of Negro Women. Many national awards were given to her—tributes to a remarkable woman.

Exercise B

Without looking back at the articles, see if you can answer the following questions.

_____ 1. When was Woodhull a presidential candidate?
a. 1775
b. 1947
c. 1872

_____ 2. What was the best way for a woman to have a part in politics?
a. by marrying a successful politician
b. by running for office herself
c. by criticizing men in politics

_____ 3. Which of the following did Woodhull *not* become?
a. nominee for president
b. wife of a state governor
c. newspaper editor

4. Was Mary McLeod Bethune born into slavery or freedom?

_____ 5. What was it that Bethune wanted to learn to do?

_____ 6. Why didn't Bethune go to school as a small child?

_____ 7. Name one of Bethune's accomplishments.

Exercise C

Answer these questions about your rate and method of reading.

8. Look back at both articles and underline the words that were unfamiliar to you in each one. Then write the title of the article that had more unfamiliar words.

9. Which article has longer and more difficult sentences?

10. Which article required that you do a slower, more careful reading in order to answer the questions in Exercise B?

Lesson 5

Sentence Fragments

A group of words punctuated like a sentence but not expressing a complete thought is called a sentence fragment.

A sentence contains a subject and a predicate and expresses a complete thought. A sentence fragment is a group of words punctuated like a sentence but not expressing a complete thought.

Sentence: The outfielder ran to the fence.

Fragment: Caught the ball with ease.

Some fragments can be corrected by adding words. Remember that a complete sentence must have a subject and a verb.

Fragment: ^V Arrived early this morning.

Corrected: ^S The builder ^V arrived early this morning.

Some fragments are parts broken off from complete sentences. To correct these, attach them to the sentences they belong with. You must also correct capitalization and punctuation.

Sentence and fragment: Luis felt energized. After his workout.

Corrected: Luis felt energized after his workout.

Some fragments are more difficult to spot because they do contain a subject and verb. Fragments like these must also be corrected by attaching them to the sentences they belong with.

Sentence and fragment: Emma received the vase. That Hal sent.

Corrected: Emma received the vase that Hal sent.

Exercise A

Write how you would correct each fragment below.

Example: Left the tools out at the end of the day.

Answer: Add a subject.

1. No one touched the electrical tools. Because they had warned us not to.

2. Work on the kitchen went fast. Once the cabinets arrived. _____

3. Carpenters measure things carefully. To avoid mistakes. _____

4. Will be done by the end of next week. _____

Exercise B

Correct the sentence fragments on the next page. Attach each one to the sentence next to it. Change capitalization and punctuation as necessary.

Example: Tigers have a bad reputation. For fierceness.

Answer: Tigers have a bad reputation for fierceness.

1. They are often feared. Because they attack people.

2. Most tigers are really shy. And avoid contact with people if possible.

3. Tigers sometimes attack people. After being cornered.

4. Tigers can live almost anywhere. Needing only food and water to survive.

5. They do not run well. For long distances.

6. Nowadays tigers are no longer captured for zoos. Since enough are born in captivity.

7. Some zoos have special areas. That are magnificent.

Exercise C

Correct each fragment by using one of the methods you have learned. If an item is correct, write *Correct*.

1. My dad often has scraps of wood lying around the basement.

2. My sister, who knows carpentry.

3. She built my brother a bookshelf for his room.

4. For her next project for her class at school.

5. And requires precise measuring and cutting.

6. A secret surprise for Mom and Dad!

7. The family will be surprised. By the creation.

Lesson 6

Run-On Sentences

A run-on sentence contains two or more sentences written together without the proper punctuation between them.

Sometimes you may be in a hurry to put your thoughts down on paper. Be sure not to write two or more sentences and improperly join them with no punctuation or with just a comma. Sentences that run together without the proper punctuation between them are called **run-on sentences**. Read this pair of example sentences.

Juan writes music he does not write stories.
Kelly is a mechanic, she repairs her own car.

The first example has no punctuation between the two sentences. The second example has only a comma. Both are run-on sentences. The chart below shows three ways to correct run-on sentences.

Guidelines for Correcting Run-On Sentences	
1. Separate the two sentences in a run-on with a period. Use a capital letter to begin the second sentence.	Juan writes music. He does not write stories. Kelly is a mechanic. She repairs her own car.
2. If two ideas in a run-on sentence are closely related, join them with a comma and a conjunction such as <i>and</i> , <i>but</i> , <i>or</i> , or <i>so</i> .	Juan writes music, but he does not write stories. Kelly is a mechanic, so she repairs her own car.
3. Join two closely related ideas with a semicolon.	Juan writes music; he does not write stories. Kelly is a mechanic; she repairs her own car.

Exercise A

Show three different ways to correct the following run-on sentence.

Jean is an artist she paints children's portraits.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Exercise B

Use one of the guidelines above to correctly rewrite each of the run-on sentences in the exercise on the next page. If an item is not a run-on, write *Correct*.

Example: Karen writes music she is a fine pianist.

Answer: Karen writes music. She is a fine pianist.

1. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Austria his father was a musician.

2. Mozart never attended school his father taught him about music.

3. By age fourteen Mozart had composed many musical works.

4. He wrote several operas and forty-one symphonies almost all of his works are still performed today.

5. Mozart had severe hardships and disappointments his music is cheerful and vigorous.

6. During his lifetime Mozart's works were well-known.

7. He died in poverty at the age of thirty-five.

Exercise C

On a separate piece of paper, rewrite the paragraph below, correcting all run-on sentences. Your paragraph should have between seven and ten sentences.

Rock and roll is a form of contemporary music, it is especially popular among young people. This music grew out of the blues it also has its roots in gospel music. Chuck Berry is often considered a founder of rock music, he is a composer and a performer. Rock songs often speak about current problems some people consider rock to be a way people communicate with each other. There are many rock 'n' roll performers, Elvis Presley is regarded by some people as the most popular artist ever.