

STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH SENTENCE FRAGMENTS

Every clause must have at least one subject and one predicate.

1. Ask 'who' or 'what' about a statement.

E.g. The queen of Hearts made some tarts.
 Who made some tarts?
 (predicate = made some tarts)
 (subject= The Queen of Hearts)

2. Subjects are made up of nouns or pronouns:

Nouns: Nouns are the naming words.
 Can put 'a' or 'the' in front of them
Pronouns: Substitutes for nouns
Verbs: Verbs are the action words.
 Can put 'didn't' in front of them or 'not' after
 e.g. Our boss wants to call a meeting.
 Our boss doesn't want to call a meeting.
 ('wants' versus 'calls')

 He was given a present.
 He was not given a present.

3. With dangling modifiers, ask who?

 e.g. Walking down the street, a truck was seen.

4. Think about whether someone would be understood if they walked into a room and uttered the statement.

e.g. It is raining outside.
 Because it is raining outside.

5. Think of the relationships set up by words like if, when, because, until, before, etc. They set up causality or relationships in time or space).

 See the handout 'Cohesion in Writing'.

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