



Fragments

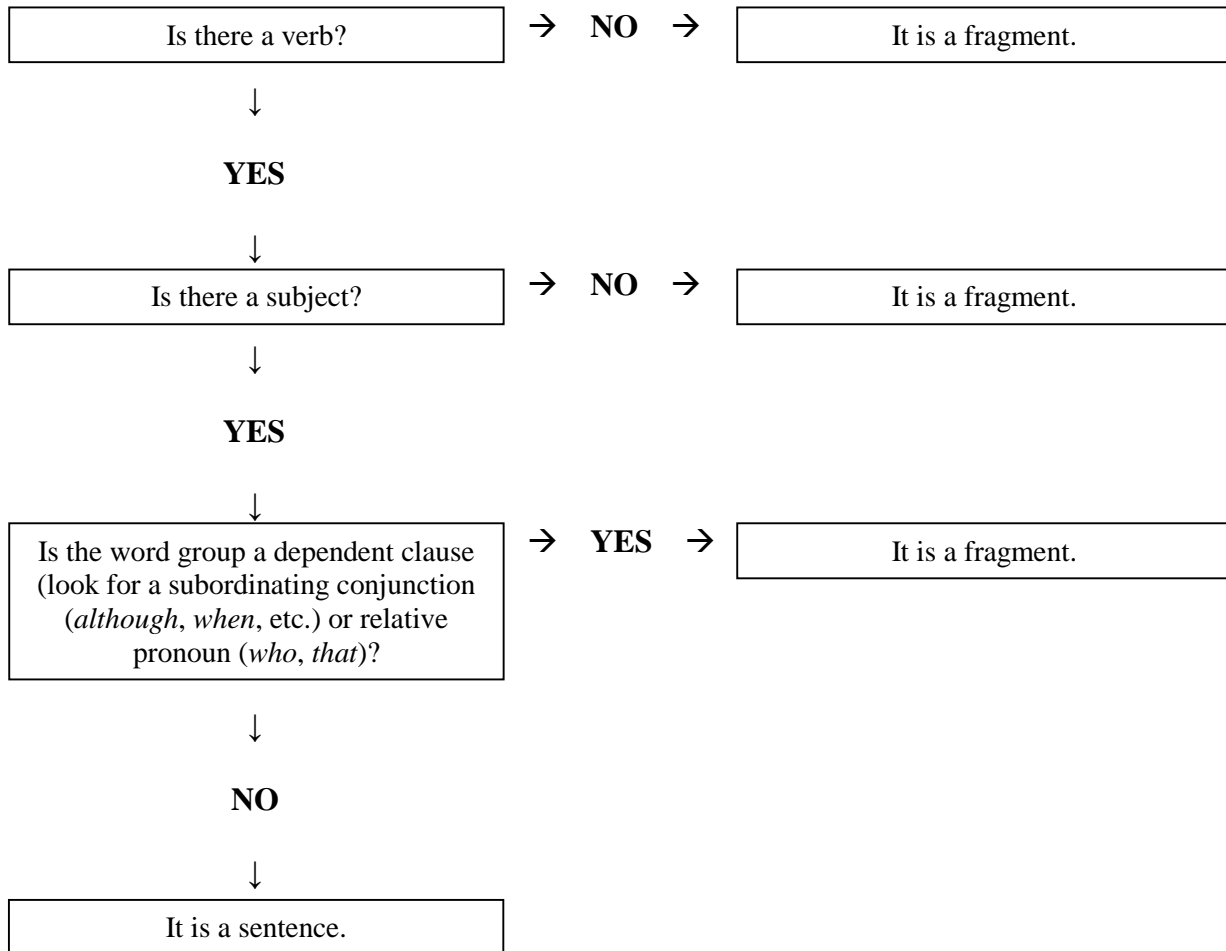
A **fragment** is a word grouping that is punctuated like a sentence but is not really a complete sentence. The most common fragments lack a subject, lack an active verb, or are dependent clauses standing alone:

No subject: And immediately popped their flares and life vests.

No active verb: Running for the bus.

Dependent Clause: When the cat leaped onto the table.

Testing for Fragments



Another way you can test for fragments is to put, “Did you know that...,” before the word grouping. If the question makes sense, it is a sentence. If it does not make sense, it is a fragment.

- Did you know that and immediately popped their flares and life vests?
- Did you know that running for the bus?
- Did you know that when the cat leaped onto the table?

None of these sentences makes sense, but watch what happens when we test a real sentence.

- Did you know that the pilots immediately popped their flares and life vests?
- Did you know that I was running for the bus?
- Did you know that when the cat leaped onto the table, it knocked over a vase?

How to Fix Fragments

To fix a sentence fragment, you can attach to it a nearby sentence or rewrite the fragment as a complete sentence.

The pilots ejected from the burning plane, landing in the water not far from the ship. ~~And~~ ^{They} immediately popped their flares and life vests.

~~Running for the bus,~~ I tripped and twisted my ankle. ~~Running for the bus.~~

We had just sat down to dinner. ~~When~~ ^{when} the cat leaped onto the table.