**SENTENCE ERRORS**

Ten-Minute Grammar

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Students should understand that…
	1. A run-on sentence is an error in which two or more independent clauses are joined together without the necessary punctuation.
	2. A comma splice is an error in which two independent clauses are “spliced” together with a comma but without the necessary coordinating conjunction.
	3. A sentence fragment is an incomplete sentence that does not contain a full independent clause, either because the writer leaves something out or because a sentence is incorrectly split up by a period.
2. Students should be able to…
	1. Identify examples of run-on sentences, comma splices, and sentence fragments.
	2. Make the necessary corrections to fix run-ons, comma splices, and fragments.



**LITERATURE:**

This unit contains example selections from the novel *The Giver* by Lois Lowry.

Ten-Minute Grammar

Sentence Errors

DAY

One

**The following sentences are all incorrect. How could you fix each one?**

1. **RUN-ON SENTENCE**: Most giant hundred-foot apes are man-eaters but I met a friendly giant ape who doesn’t eat humans.
2. **COMMA SPLICE**: The friendly giant ape and I became friends, we did everything together.
3. **SENTENCE FRAGMENT**: Like smashing buildings and eating people’s cars.

**In your own words…**

1. What is a “run-on sentence”?
2. What is a “comma splice”?
3. What is a “sentence fragment”?

**What type of error is each example: a run-on, a comma splice, or a fragment?**

1. The police finally arrived, they wanted to capture or kill the giant ape.
2. For destroying property and endangering people’s lives.
3. The friendly giant ape smashed the police cars the terrified police officers ran for their lives.

**Wordplay – Just for fun!**

* **DESCRAMBLER**: Try to sort out the five scrambled words below:

OESP MBSOT HHTOUG ATTRPEN LSEFILES

Ten-Minute Grammar

Sentence Errors

DAY

Two

There are two ways to fix a sentence fragment:

* Add a subject or predicate (or both) to make it an independent clause.
* Connect it to another sentence by changing the punctuation.

**In the following paragraph from The Giver by Lois Lowry, three sentence fragments have been added. Underline the incorrect sentences and then use the proper editing marks to correct the errors:**

Jonas rode at a leisurely pace. Glancing at the bikeports beside the buildings to see if he could spot Asher’s. He didn’t often do his volunteer hours with his friend because Asher frequently fooled around. And made serious work a little difficult. But now, with Twelve coming so soon and the volunteer hours ending. It didn’t seem to matter.

**What type of error is each example: a run-on, a comma splice, or a fragment?**

1. Without even thinking, and without really trying.
2. My computer got a virus I’ll have to spend hundreds of dollars to get it working again.

**Wordplay – Just for fun!**

* **ANAGRAM**: Rearrange the letters in the nonsense phrase below to create new words that actually make sense.

EGO HOOD ANALOGY

(Hint: searchers)

Ten-Minute Grammar

Sentence Errors

DAY

Three

**Identify the following sentences as RUN-ON, COMMA SPLICE, FRAGMENT, or CORRECT:**

1. There’s a new smart-phone app that will write your English essays for you but the program has terrible grammar.
2. Recently, I read a great book; I think you would love it.
3. My little brother can build anything out of LEGO blocks, he once made a life-sized truck that looked just like Dad’s Chevy.
4. Watching from the window as the sun slowly set.
5. Running with scissors is stupid and dangerous, so it wouldn’t make a very good Olympic event.
6. If you ever catch on fire, remember to stop, drop, and roll, this should smother the fire.
7. The newspaper reporter would do anything to get his story he didn’t even care about endangering innocent people getting the story was all that mattered.
8. I’m exhausted.
9. From running that race yesterday.

**Wordplay – Just for fun!**

* **FIXER-ROOTER**: How many words can you think of that have the same prefix, suffix, or root as the multisyllabic word below?

MISREPRESENTATION MIS / REPRESENT / ATION

(the act of representing something falsely or incorrectly)

Ten-Minute Grammar

Sentence Errors

DAY

Four

Comma splices and run-on sentences are both errors because they incorrectly combine independent clauses. So to fix a run-on or a comma splice, you have to remember the rules for correctly combining independent clauses:

* Combine the clauses with a comma and a coordinating conjunction (and, but, so)
* Combine the clauses with a semi-colon
* OR – Put a period between the clauses to make them separate sentences

**In the following paragraph from The Giver by Lois Lowry, four sentence errors have been added. Underline the incorrect sentences and then use the proper editing marks to correct the errors:**

Jonas thought again about that incident, he was still bewildered by it. It had happened during the recreation period, when he had been playing with Asher. Jonas had casually picked up an apple from the basket where the snacks were kept he had thrown it to his friend. Asher had thrown it back and they had begun a simple game of catch. There was nothing special about it, it was an activity he had performed countless times: throw, catch; throw, catch. It was effortless for Jonas, and even boring.

**Wordplay – Just for fun!**

* **EIGHT BALL**: Create as many words as you can using three or more of the letters below (at least one eight-letter word is possible):

 T S E W D A R S

Ten-Minute Grammar

Sentence Errors

QUIZ

DAY

**REVIEW FOR TODAY’S QUIZ:**

1. What is a comma splice?
2. What is a run-on sentence?
3. What is a sentence fragment?
4. How would you correct the following sentences?
	1. Jerry Spinelli is a very famous author he has written many best-selling novels for young adults.
	2. My favorite book is *Ender’s Game*, I have read it ten times.
	3. BB guns are only toys but they can actually kill a person I need to be very careful with mine.

Ten-Minute Grammar

Sentence Errors

DAY

Five

**In the following excerpt from The Giver by Lois Lowry, several sentence errors have been added. Read the excerpt and then answer the questions below:**

(a) School seemed a little different today. (b) The classes were the same but the other new Twelves were abuzz with descriptions of their first day of training. (c) All of them talked at once, interrupting each other. (d) Jonas listened he was very aware of his own admonition not to discuss his training but it would have been impossible, anyway. (e) There was no way to describe to his friends what he had experienced there in the Annex room, how could you describe a sled without describing a hill and snow?

1. Is sentence (a) a sentence fragment?
2. Sentence (b) is a run-on sentence. How could you fix it?
3. Is sentence (c) a comma splice?
4. What two corrections could you make to fix sentence (d)?
5. Is sentence (e) a run-on or a comma splice?
6. How would you fix sentence (e)?

**Wordplay – Just for fun!**

* **RHYME THYME**: Time to think like a rapper. How many rhymes can you come up with for the following word?

REAL

Ten-Minute Grammar

Sentence Errors

DAY

Six

**What type of error is each example: a run-on, a comma splice, or a fragment?**

1. Like the ancient Egyptians used to do.
2. The pants fit perfectly, they were way too expensive.
3. Hanging out at the mall is really boring I try to avoid doing that.

**Are the following sentences grammatically correct? Answer YES or NO.**

1. This stapler must be broken; it keeps putting in two staples at once.
2. As soon as my hair dries out, I’ll come over to your house, you can braid it for me.
3. My cell phone has a built-in camera but it takes terrible pictures I hardly ever use it.
4. Lois Lowry, the author of *The Giver*, has won the Newbery Medal twice.
5. Thinking, as she always does, about what everyone thinks about her.

**Wordplay – Just for fun!**

* **FOUR-LETTER WORDS**: Take the four-letter word below and change one letter to make a new four-letter word (keep it clean!) Then take *that* word and change one letter to make a new word. Then take *that* word and… You get the picture.

 HOLD

Ten-Minute Grammar

Sentence Errors

DAY

Seven

**In the following excerpt from The Giver by Lois Lowry, several sentence errors have been added. Read the excerpt and then answer the questions below:**

(a) Sideways, spinning, the sled hit a bump in the hill Jonas was jarred loose and thrown violently into the air. (b) He fell with his leg twisted under him and could hear the crack of bone his face scraped along jagged edges of ice. (c) When he came, at last, to a stop, he lay shocked and still, feeling nothing at first but fear. (d) Then, the first wave of pain came, he gasped. (e) It was as if a hatchet lay lodged in his leg. (f) Slicing through each nerve with a hot blade.

1. Is sentence (a) a run-on or a comma splice?
2. How could you fix sentence (a)?
3. Sentence (b) is a run-on. How could you fix it?
4. Is sentence (c) a fragment, run-on, comma splice, or correct?
5. Is sentence (d) a fragment or a comma splice?
6. How could you fix sentence (d)?
7. How could you fix sentence (f)?

**Wordplay – Just for fun!**

* **CATALOG CREATOR**: The root word **“-path- / -pathy-”** means “feeling or suffering.” How many words can you list that contain this root?

**Name:**

Jonas rode at a leisurely pace. Glancing at the bikeports beside the buildings to see if he could spot Asher’s. He didn’t often do his volunteer hours with his friend because Asher frequently fooled around. And made serious work a little difficult. But now, with Twelve coming so soon and the volunteer hours ending. It didn’t seem to matter.

Sentence Errors

DAY

Two

**Name:**

Jonas rode at a leisurely pace. Glancing at the bikeports beside the buildings to see if he could spot Asher’s. He didn’t often do his volunteer hours with his friend because Asher frequently fooled around. And made serious work a little difficult. But now, with Twelve coming so soon and the volunteer hours ending. It didn’t seem to matter.

Sentence Errors

DAY

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Sentence Errors

DAY

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Sentence Errors

DAY

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**Name:**

Jonas thought again about that incident, he was still bewildered by it. It had happened during the recreation period, when he had been playing with Asher. Jonas had casually picked up an apple from the basket where the snacks were kept he had thrown it to his friend. Asher had thrown it back and they had begun a simple game of catch. There was nothing special about it, it was an activity he had performed countless times: throw, catch; throw, catch. It was effortless for Jonas, and even boring.

Sentence Errors

DAY

Four

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Sentence Errors

DAY

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Sentence Errors

DAY

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Sentence Errors

DAY

Four

Sentence Errors

Ten-Minute Grammar

Practice

Worksheet

**NAME: PERIOD:**

A **run-on sentence** is an error because it has two or more independent clauses with no punctuation between them.

A **comma splice** is an error because it has two independent clauses “spliced” together with only a comma and no conjunction.

***Identify each example as a RUN-ON, a COMMA SPLICE, or a CORRECT sentence:***

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Because of my F on that test, my grade has dropped to a D, Mom and Dad are upset.
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Because of my F on that test, my grade has dropped to a D; Mom and Dad are upset.
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I have read that book six times now and it just keeps getting better every time.
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I have read that book six times now, it just keeps getting better every time.
5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ “Angry Birds” is the stupidest game ever invented I spend a ton of time playing it.
6. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ “Angry Birds” is the stupidest game ever invented, but I spend a ton of time playing it.

There are three ways to fix a **run-on** or a **comma splice**:

* Put a period after the first independent clause and capitalize the next word.
* Put a semi-colon between two independent clauses.
* Put a comma and a conjunction (and, but, or, so) between two independent clauses.

***Which answer fixes the incorrect sentence?***

1. Dr. Seuss was a very famous author he wrote many best-selling stories for children.
	1. Add the word “and” between “author” and “he”
	2. Add a comma between “author” and “he”
	3. Add a semi-colon between “author” and “he”
2. My little brother’s favorite movie is *Kung Fu Panda*, I watch it with him all the time.
	1. Delete the comma after “*Panda*”
	2. Add the word “so” after the comma
	3. Add a comma after “him”
3. Pocketknives can be very dangerous, Dad told me to be careful with mine he doesn’t want me to cut myself.
	1. Change the comma to a period and add a semi-colon after “mine”
	2. Add the word “and” after the comma
	3. Delete the comma after “dangerous”

***Write your own example of a RUN-ON SENTENCE. Then use the proper editing marks to show how the sentence could be corrected:***

***Write your own example of a COMMA SPLICE. Then use the proper editing marks to show how the sentence could be corrected:***

A **sentence fragment** is an error because it is not a complete independent clause—it’s missing a subject or predicate (or both).

***Identify each example as a FRAGMENT or a CORRECT sentence:***

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Even after midnight. The restaurant on the corner is still open.
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Even after midnight, the restaurant on the corner is still open.
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Twelve angry monkeys and three friendly apes.
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Twelve angry monkeys devoured three friendly apes.

There are two ways to fix a **sentence fragment**:

* Add a subject or predicate (or both) to make it a full independent clause.
* Change the punctuation to connect the fragment to full independent clause.

***Which answer fixes the incorrect sentence?***

1. After serving a sentence of twenty years. The man was finally released from prison.
	1. Add a comma after “After” and delete the word “finally”
	2. Change the period after “years” to a semi-colon and delete “The man”
	3. Change the period after “years” to a comma and make the “The” lowercase
2. Lost in the wilderness with only a hatchet.
	1. Change “Lost” to “Losing” and then add a comma after “wilderness”
	2. Change the period to a comma and add an independent clause like “Brian survived”
	3. Add a semi-colon between “wilderness” and “with”

***Write your own example of a COMMA SPLICE. Then use the proper editing marks to show how the sentence could be corrected:***

**NAME: PERIOD:**

**Match the following terms with the correct definition:**

1. Run-on sentence \_\_\_\_\_
2. Comma splice \_\_\_\_\_
3. Sentence fragment \_\_\_\_\_

**A.** Two independent clauses joined only by a comma

**B.** A complete, grammatically correct sentence

**C.** An incomplete sentence that is missing either a subject or a predicate (or both)

**D.** Two or more independent clauses without any punctuation between them

**Identify each sentence as a fragment (F), run-on (RO), comma splice (CS), or correct (OK):**

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ The firefighters arrived, they put out the fire.
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ After eating everything on his plate.
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ The giraffe and the gazelle became friends, and they lived happily ever after.
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ You can get two burritos for five dollars I have ten dollars so I can get four burritos.
5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ The bird flew into the plane’s propeller, it caused a lot of damage.
6. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ When I swallow, I get a sharp pain in my throat.
7. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Buried in the cemetery in a small metal case.
8. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I love drinking milk but it has to be skim milk.

Sentence Errors

Quiz

**NAME: PERIOD:**

**Match the following terms with the correct definition:**

1. Run-on sentence \_\_\_\_\_
2. Comma splice \_\_\_\_\_
3. Sentence fragment \_\_\_\_\_

**A.** Two independent clauses joined only by a comma

**B.** A complete, grammatically correct sentence

**C.** An incomplete sentence that is missing either a subject or a predicate (or both)

**D.** Two or more independent clauses without any punctuation between them

**Identify each sentence as a fragment (F), run-on (RO), comma splice (CS), or correct (OK):**

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ The firefighters arrived, they put out the fire.
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ After eating everything on his plate.
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ The giraffe and the gazelle became friends, and they lived happily ever after.
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ You can get two burritos for five dollars I have ten dollars so I can get four burritos.
5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ The bird flew into the plane’s propeller, it caused a lot of damage.
6. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ When I swallow, I get a sharp pain in my throat.
7. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Buried in the cemetery in a small metal case.
8. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I love drinking milk but it has to be skim milk.

Sentence Errors

Quiz

Sentence Errors

Page Two

Sentence Errors

Page Two

**Which answer fixes the incorrect sentence?**

1. Watching from the window as the sun slowly set.

**A.** Add a comma after “window”

**B.** Change “Watching” to “Watched”

**C.** Add “The old man was” before “watching”

1. There’s a new smart-phone app that will write your English essays for you but it has terrible grammar.

**A.** Add a comma between “you” and “but”

**B.** Add a comma between “app” and “that”

**C.** Delete the word “but”

1. If you ever catch fire, remember to stop, drop, and roll, this should smother the fire and save your life.

**A.** Delete the comma after “fire”

**B.** Put a period after “roll” and capitalize “This”

**C.** Delete the comma after “roll”

**Use the proper editing marks to correct these sentences:**

1. I want to learn how to build huge pyramids. Like the ancient Egyptians used to do.
2. This dishwasher must be broken it keeps melting the dishes we try to wash.
3. The shirt looks great on me, it’s way too expensive.
4. Without thinking about it. He ran into the burning building there was a little girl trapped inside.

**Which answer fixes the incorrect sentence?**

1. Watching from the window as the sun slowly set.

**A.** Add a comma after “window”

**B.** Change “Watching” to “Watched”

**C.** Add “The old man was” before “watching”

1. There’s a new smart-phone app that will write your English essays for you but it has terrible grammar.

**A.** Add a comma between “you” and “but”

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**Use the proper editing marks to correct these sentences:**

1. I want to learn how to build huge pyramids. Like the ancient Egyptians used to do.
2. This dishwasher must be broken it keeps melting the dishes we try to wash.
3. The shirt looks great on me, it’s way too expensive.
4. Without thinking about it. He ran into the burning building there was a little girl trapped inside.

Alternate

QUIZ

Sentence Errors

Ten-Minute Grammar

**NAME: PERIOD:**

**Match the following terms with the correct definition:**

1. Run-on sentence \_\_\_\_\_
2. Comma splice \_\_\_\_\_
3. Sentence fragment \_\_\_\_\_

**A.** Two independent clauses joined only by a comma

**B.** An incomplete sentence that is missing either a subject or a predicate (or both)

**C.** Two or more independent clauses without any punctuation between them

**Identify each sentence as a fragment, run-on, comma splice, or correct:**

1. \_\_\_\_ The firefighters finally arrived, they put out the fire.
	1. comma splice
2. \_\_\_\_ After eating everything on his plate.
	1. fragment
3. \_\_\_\_ The giraffe and the gazelle became friends, and they lived happily ever after.
	1. correct
4. \_\_\_\_ You can get two burritos for five dollars I have ten dollars so I can get four burritos.
	1. run-on
5. \_\_\_\_ The bird flew into the plane’s propeller, it caused a lot of damage.
	1. comma splice
6. \_\_\_\_ When I swallow, I get a sharp pain in my throat.
	1. correct
7. \_\_\_\_ Buried in the cemetery in a small metal case.
	1. fragment
8. \_\_\_\_ I love drinking milk but it has to be skim milk.
	1. run-on

**Which answer fixes the incorrect sentence?**

1. Watching from the window as the sun slowly set.

**A.** Add a comma after “window”

**B.** Add “The old man was” before “watching”

1. There’s a new smart-phone app that will write your English essays for you but it has terrible grammar.

**A.** Add a comma between “you” and “but”

**B.** Add a comma between “app” and “that”

1. If you ever catch fire, remember to stop, drop, and roll, this should smother the fire and save your life.

**A.** Delete the comma after “fire”

**B.** Put a period after “roll” and capitalize “This”

**Fill in the blank to correct these sentences:**

1. I want to learn how to build huge **pyramids. Like** the ancient Egyptians used to do.

**I want to learn how to build huge \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the ancient Egyptians used to do.**

1. This dishwasher must be **broken it** keeps melting the dishes we try to wash.

**This dishwasher must be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ keeps melting the dishes we try to wash.**

1. The shirt looks great on **me, it’s** way too expensive.

**The shirt looks great on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ way too expensive.**

1. Without thinking about **it. He** ran into the burning **building there** was a little girl trapped inside.

**Without thinking about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ran into the burning \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was a little girl trapped inside.**

Extra

Practice

Sentence Errors

Ten-Minute Grammar

**NAME: PERIOD:**

**As you review for the unit quiz, remember the sentence errors we’ve studied:**

* **RUN-ON SENTENCE: two or more independent clauses without any punctuation between them**
* **COMMA SPLICE: two independent clauses joined with a comma but without a conjunction**
* **SENTENCE FRAGMENT: an incomplete thought that is missing a subject or predicate (or both)**

**In other words, all three of these sentence errors have to do with either not having an independent clause or incorrectly combining independent clauses.**

***In each sentence, underline any independent clauses. Then decided if the sentence is a run-on (RO), a comma splice (CS), a fragment (F), or correct (OK):***

**RO**

**EXAMPLE:** \_\_\_\_\_ A monkey attacked the zookeeper yesterday the man was not injured.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ My friends finally arrived, the birthday party started.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ After fighting off a thousand zombies and barely surviving.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ The dog and the cat became friends, and they lived happily ever after.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ You can get four chocolates for a dollar I have two dollars so I can get eight chocolates.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ The soldier pressed the button on the detonator, the building exploded.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ When I walk, I get a sharp pain in my left foot.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Suspended in the air without any strings to hold it up.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ I love eating spaghetti but it has to be made by my grandma.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ My little sister can lift things with her mind, but she doesn’t tell anyone about it.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ The ninja zebras attack punishment flew from their fists and the villains ran in terror.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ The autofocus feature on my camera is broken, every picture I take is blurry.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Scurrying across the floor and squeaking loudly.

**SECOND PAGE ANSWERS: 13 – B , 14 – A , 15 – C , 16 – B**

**Which answer fixes the incorrect sentence?**

1. Sleeping lazily on the couch all afternoon.

**A.** Add a comma after “couch”

**B.** Add “My brother was” before “sleeping”

**C.** Change “Sleeping” to “Slept”

1. There’s a new computer program that will translate anything you say into Spanish but it speaks with a terrible accent.

**A.** Add a comma between “Spanish” and “but”

**B.** Add a comma between “program” and “that”

**C.** Delete the word “but”

1. If you ever lose your credit card, remember to call the bank and ask them to cancel the account, this should keep a thief from using your card.

**A.** Delete the comma after “card”

**B.** Delete the comma after “account”

**C.** Put a period after “account” and capitalize “This”

1. Before school had even started. Edward was already sitting in the principal’s office.

**A.** Add a comma after “Edward”

**B.** Change the period after “started” to a semi-colon

**C.** Add a comma after “Before”

**Use the proper editing marks to correct these sentences:**

**EXAMPLE:** She flew through the air her powers were getting stronger, she would use them for good.

**but**

1. I want to learn how to drive a racecar. Like a famous NASCAR driver.
2. My DVD player must be broken the only movie it will play is *Star Wars*.
3. The sweater looks great on you, it’s on sale for a great price.
4. Without trying to. She had knocked the burglar out by slamming the door he was lying unconscious in the hall.

**FIRST PAGE ANSWERS: 1 – CS 2 – F 3 – OK 4 – RO 5 – CS 6 – OK 7 – F 8 – RO 9 – OK 10 – RO 11 – CS 12- F**