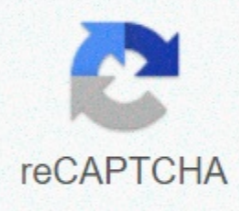




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## Run on sentences and comma splices worksheet

If your computer is equipped with PowerPoint, click the PowerPoint icon on the right for a short PowerPoint presentation about Run-on Sentences. Click [HERE](#) to review Sentence Fragments. Click [HERE](#) for help with Powerpoint. A RUN-ON SENTENCE (sometimes referred to as fused sentence) has at least two parts, one of which can stand for itself (in other words, two independent clauses), but the two parts have smooched together instead of being properly connected. Also review the section describing things that can happen between two independent clauses. It is important to realize that the length of a sentence really has nothing to do with whether a sentence is a run-on or not: being a run-on is a structural flaw that can plague even a very short sentence: The sun is high, put on some sunscreen. An extremely long sentence, on the other hand, may be a run-off-at-the-mouth sentence, but it can otherwise be sound, structural. Click here to see a 239-word sentence that is a perfectly fine sentence (structurally) When two independent clauses are connected with only one comma, they form a run-on sentence called a comma-joint. The example just above (about sunscreen) is a comma-joint. When using a comma to connect two independent clauses, it must be accompanied by a small conjunction (and, but, too, neither, yet, or, so). The sun is high, so put on some sunscreen. Run-on sentences usually occur in the following circumstances\*: When an independent clause provides an order or directive based on what was said in the previous independent clause: This next chapter has a lot of difficult information in it, you should start studying right away. (We could put a period where the comma is and start a new sentence. A semicolon can also work there.) When two independent clauses are connected by a transitional expression (conjunctive adverb) such as however, additionally, nevertheless. Mr. Nguyen has sent his four children to ivy-league colleges, but he has sacrificed his health working day and night in the dusty bakery. (Again, where the first comma appears, we could have used either a period—and started a new sentence—or a semicolon.) When the second of two independent clauses contains a pronoun that connects it to the first independent clause. This computer does not make sense to me, it came without a manual. (Although these two clauses are quite concise, and the ideas are closely related, this is a run-on sentence. We need a period where the comma now stands.) Most of these computers in the Learning Assistance Center are broken already, this proves my point about U.S. computer manufacturers. Again, two nicely related statements, incorrectly connected — one run-on. Use a period to cure this sentence. RUN-ON SENTENCES AND COMMA SPLICES Run-on sentences can be divided into two types. The first occurs when an author puts any mark punctuation and no coordinating conjunction between independent clauses. The second is called a comma, which occurs when two or more independent clauses are joined by just one comma and no coordinating conjunction. Example of a run-on sentence: The flowers are beautiful they favor the room. (Incorrect) Example of a comma cormorant: The flowers are beautiful, they light up the room. (Incorrect) Examples of correct options: The flowers are beautiful. They favor the room. The flowers are beautiful; they favour the room. The flowers are beautiful, and they favor the room. The flowers are beautiful because they benefit the room. A run-on sentence is not defined by its length! That a sentence is very long does not automatically make it a run-on sentence. As you will see, determine the sentence structure and the use of punctuation if a sentence is a run-on. To better understand run-on sentences and come joints, it is important to review the basics of writing a grammatically correct simple sentence: A simple sentence consists of only an independent clause. An independent clause is a group of words that contain a subject and a predicate and form a complete thought when standing alone. The topic refers to someone or something (the subject contains at least one noun or pronoun). The predicate refers to what the subject does or is (the predicate contains the verb or verb). Both the subject and the predicate may contain additional descriptive elements, such as adverbs, adjectives, prepositions, or other modifying phrases, but in its most basic form, the subject is the part of the sentence that contains nouns and the predicate contains the verb. A sentence can be complete and correct with a basic independent clause made up of a subject plus its corresponding predicate. To demonstrate the basic structure of a simple sentence, find the noun that forms the subject and divide it from the verb. Subject Predicate sentence I am. I. The man was studying. The man was studying. A frog jumped. A frog jumped. Lola sings. Lola sings. By sharing nouns and verbs, we can add modifiers to a simple sentence and still see the two basic parts, the subject and the predicate. Subject Predicate The man studied. The good man studied hard. The good man at the library studied hard for the test on Friday. When looking at the structure of an independent clause, it is good to think of all parts of the subject separately from all parts of the predicate. Together, the subject and predicate form the two basic and separate parts of each theorem. Subject Predicate The kind man and his wife studied hard for the test and read a book. The husband, his wife and their children studied hard, read books and had dinner. If the independent clause forms a complete thought, a period at the end indicates that the sentence is complete. The period means STOP. sentence has ended, and a new sentence will begin. Run-ons and commas splices occur when more than one topic/predicate pair is in the sentence. When a subject/predicate pair is followed by an additional subject/predicate pair within a sentence (forming separate independent clauses), they must be separated (or joined) according to very specific rules of punctuation and grammar. Look at the following example of a run-on sentence: The friendly man studied hard his wife read a book. (Incorrect) If we divide the sentence into subject/predicate pairs (each an independent clause), we see that two independent clauses exist, one after the other: First independent clause Second independent clause The Subject Preacher Predicate The kind man studied hard his wife read a book. Without the correct separation, the two independent clauses written together form a run-on sentence. When you can identify a run-on sentence through its incorrect structure, it's not hard to find a way to correct it. When two independent clauses occur in a sentence, they must be joined (or separated) in one of four ways: 1. The two statements can be made into two separate sentences by adding a period. 2. The two clauses can be joined by a comma and a coordinating conjunction (commover plus: and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet). 3. The two clauses may be joined by a semicolon. 4. The two clauses can be rewritten by adding, modifying, rearranging, or deleting words. The easiest way to accomplish this is to add a subordinate conjunction between the statements. Note that joining the independent clauses with a comma is not a choice. When two independent clauses are joined by only one comma, this error is called a comma joint. The table below shows the four correct options. When two independent clauses appear in one sentence, try to imagine an intermediate column in which only four possibilities exist to accede to the two clauses: First Independent Clause Second Independent Clause Subject The Subject Predicated 4 CORRECTOPTIONS Subject Predicated The kind man studied hard . (period) His wife read a book. The kind man studied hard, and, but, or, for, neither, so, yet (come plus a coordinating conjunction) his wife read a book. The kind man studied hard ; (semicolon) his wife read a book. The kind man studied hard while afterafter after-all. . . . (example of subordination conjunctions - no comma required) his wife read a book. Note again that in the above example a comma alone is NOT one of the correct options. The good man studied hard, his wife read a book. (Incorrect) A comma alone between two independent clauses creates an incorrect comma. Summary (Including related grammar rules) 1. An independent clause contains a subject/predicate pair and expresses a Given. Music makes my life worth living. Subject Predicate Music makes my life worth living. 2. A simple sentence is made made by only one independent theorem: Music makes my life worth living. 3. A run-on sentence consists of two or more independent clauses that are not united correctly or which should be made in separate sentences. A run-on sentence is defined by its grammatical structure, not its length. Wrong: My favorite band is in town they're performing now. Right: My favorite band is in town. They're performing now. Right: My favorite band is in town, and they're performing now. 4. A comma joint is the incorrect use of a comma to adhere to two independent clauses. Wrong: I love classical music, it makes me feel happy. Right: I love classical music because it makes me feel happy. Right: I love classical music; it makes me feel happy. 5. A composite sentence contains two or more independent movements that are correctly associated with a comma plus a coordinating conjunction or of a semicolon: Music means a lot to me, and some songs bring wonderful memories to mind. First independent clause Second independent clause Subject Subject Comma and Coordinating Conjunction Subject Predicate Music means a lot to me, and some songs bring wonderful memories to mind. Music means a lot to me; some songs bring wonderful memories to mind. First independent clause Second independent clause Subject Predicate Semicolon Subject Predicated Music means a lot to me ; some songs bring wonderful memories to mind. 6. A comma plus a coordinating conjunction can link independent clauses correctly. There are seven coordinating conjunctions (sometimes remembered by the acronym fanboys): for, and, neither, but, or, yet, so 7. A complex sentence contains an independent clause and one or more dependency clauses. The dependent clause begins with a subordination conjunction: I always think of the summer when they play that song. First independent clause second independent clause Subject Predicate Subordinating Conjunction Subject Predicate I always think of the summer when they play that song. 8. A subordination conjunction links a dependent clause to an independent clause. The dependent clause cannot stand alone; it requires the attachment of an independent clause to express the full meaning of the sentence. The following are examples of some of the most common subordination conjunctions: after, though, as if, as if, because, before, though, if, in order to, rather than, then, so that, than, that, however, if, if, until, when, when, where, where, if, while, for more information, please see the following TIPS sheet: Independence and dependent clauses: Coordination and subordination Type and purpose

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