JUNIOR CYCLE ENGLISH · FREE REVISION SHEET

Sentences, fragments and run-ons

↗ Léim

Learning outcomes (2015 specification): W10, W11, W12. Play the game: **leim.ie/sentence-surgeon.html**

1. What a sentence needs

Who or what	the subject: *The bus, Ciara, We*
A verb	doing or being: *was, laughed, missed*
A complete thought	makes sense on its own; capital letter at the start, end mark at the end

2. Fragments: half a sentence

Because the bus was late. → **Because the bus was late, we missed the film.**
Running down the corridor. → **I was** running down the corridor.
The boy with the red scarf. → The boy with the red scarf **waved**.

3. Run-ons: two sentences jammed together

It was raining, we stayed in. × (a comma can't hold two sentences)
→ It was raining**. W**e stayed in.
→ It was raining**, so** we stayed in.

4. Four types of sentence

Statement	gives information: *The shop opens at nine.*
Question	asks something: *Where is my jumper?*
Command	tells someone to do something: *Close the door.*
Exclamation	strong feeling: *What a goal! How cold it is!*

5. Simple, compound, complex

Simple	one clause: *Rain fell all night.* (Two names or two verbs can still be simple: *Ciara and Jack walked to school.*)
Compound	two main clauses + and / but / so / or: *We knocked, but nobody answered.*
Complex	main clause + a because / when / if / although / until … clause: *We stayed in because it was raining.*

6. Joining words

but contrast · **so** result · **or** choice · **because** reason · **when / until / before / while** time · **if** condition · **although** surprise

7. Commas with joining words

Comma **before** and / but / so / or when they join two sentences: *I was tired, but I kept running.*
"Because / when / if…" part first? Comma after it: *If you hurry, you'll catch the train.*

8. Sentences for effect

Mix short and long sentences. A very short sentence after longer ones creates tension or shock: *Then the lights went out.* Writers sometimes use a fragment on purpose (*Too silent.*), but in your own answers use full sentences.

Classic mistakes: a comma between two sentences (comma splice) · starting a sentence with "Because…" and never finishing it · forgetting the question mark · a small letter after a full stop.

Exam tip: read your answer back in your head. Where your voice drops and you pause, you need a full stop, not a comma.

PRACTICE · 44 QUESTIONS

Have a go

↗ Léim

A. Sentence, fragment or run-on?

1. The bus was late again. _____
2. Because the bus was late. _____
3. It was raining, we stayed indoors. _____
4. Running down the corridor. _____
5. When the bell rang, everyone rushed outside. _____
6. The test was hard, we all passed it. _____
7. The girl who won the race. _____
8. Nobody answered the phone. _____
9. The sea was rough the ferry was cancelled. _____
10. Although she was nervous, Aisling sang beautifully. _____
11. A huge crowd outside the stadium. _____
12. We waited for hours, nobody came. _____

B. Statement, question, command or exclamation? Add the end mark.

13. What a brilliant goal _____
14. How cold it is _____
15. Put your phones away _____
16. Did you feed the cat _____
17. Close the door _____
18. The shop opens at nine _____
19. My cousin lives in Sligo _____
20. Where is my jumper _____

C. Fix each run-on: write it as two sentences

21. Niamh missed the bus, she walked to school. _____
22. Pizza is my favourite, my sister hates it. _____
23. My phone died, nobody could ring me. _____
24. The water was freezing, we swam anyway. _____
25. The power went off, we lit candles. _____
26. Dad burnt the toast, the smoke alarm went off. _____

D. Fill the gap with a joining word

although **because** **but** **if** **so** **until**

27. I was tired _____ I kept running. _____
28. It started to rain _____ we went inside. _____
29. We stayed in _____ it was raining. _____
30. Wait here _____ I come back. _____
31. You can come _____ you finish your homework. _____
32. Aoife won the race _____ she had a sore leg. _____

E. Simple, compound or complex?

33. Ciara and Jack walked to school. _____
34. We knocked, but nobody answered. _____
35. If you hurry, you'll catch the train. _____
36. The children laughed and shouted. _____
37. She smiled when she saw the cake. _____
38. The wind howled, and the windows rattled. _____

F. Turn each fragment into a full sentence

39. After we left the cinema. _____
40. Waiting for the bus in the rain. _____
41. My best friend from primary school. _____
42. The phone that I lost last week. _____

G. Exam-style

43. Correct the punctuation: "The match started at three it was freezing. Our team scored first, the crowd went wild. Then the rain came."

_____

_____

44. Join into one good sentence: "The bus broke down. We were late. We missed the show."

_____

CHECK YOUR WORK

Answers

↗ Léim

A	1. sentence · 2. fragment · 3. run-on · 4. fragment · 5. sentence · 6. run-on · 7. fragment · 8. sentence · 9. run-on · 10. sentence · 11. fragment · 12. run-on
B	13. exclamation ! · 14. exclamation ! · 15. command . · 16. question ? · 17. command . · 18. statement . · 19. statement . · 20. question ?
C	21. Niamh missed the bus. She walked to school. · 22. Pizza is my favourite. My sister hates it. · 23. My phone died. Nobody could ring me. · 24. The water was freezing. We swam anyway. · 25. The power went off. We lit candles. · 26. Dad burnt the toast. The smoke alarm went off. (A comma + and / but / so is also right, e.g. Niamh missed the bus, so she walked to school.)
D	27. but · 28. so · 29. because · 30. until · 31. if · 32. although
E	33. simple · 34. compound · 35. complex · 36. simple · 37. complex · 38. compound
F	Any full sentence that finishes the thought, e.g. 39. After we left the cinema, we went for chips. · 40. We were waiting for the bus in the rain. · 41. My best friend from primary school moved to Cork. · 42. The phone that I lost last week turned up under my bed.
G	43. The match started at three. It was freezing. Our team scored first. The crowd went wild. Then the rain came. (Or: Our team scored first, **and** the crowd went wild.) 44. e.g. Because the bus broke down, we were late and missed the show.

Worked examples

2. Because the bus was late.
Because... then what happened? There's no main part, so it's a **fragment**. Fix: Because the bus was late, we missed the film.

5. When the bell rang, everyone rushed outside.
"When the bell rang" can't stand alone, but it's joined to a main part (everyone rushed outside), so it's a **sentence**.

36. The children laughed and shouted.
Two verbs, but one subject doing both: one clause, so **simple**.

34. We knocked, but nobody answered.
Two main clauses (we knocked / nobody answered) joined by "but": **compound**.

Got one wrong? Ask: who did what? Is the thought finished? Then play **Sentence Surgeon** at leim.ie/sentence-surgeon.html: the "Go back over these" list at the end shows the reason for each mistake.

All sentences written by Léim. Léim is independent and not connected with the State Examinations Commission or the NCCA.