

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Hour: \_\_\_\_\_

## REVIEW / STUDY SHEET ON COMMA SPLICES AND FRAGMENTS

### COMMA SPLICES:

Comma splices are two complete sentences that can stand on their own (two complete thoughts) that are joined with commas (which is incorrect)

Therefore if you have two independent clauses you should do one of the following things:

- 1) can be joined with a comma AND a coordinating conjunction (and, or, so, but, yet)
- 2) can be made into two separate sentences
- 3) can be joined with a semi-colon ; (NO conjunction is used with this) – Also sentences need to be closely related to each other in order to join them this way
- 4) can be joined with a subordination conjunction (because, although, after, etc.) – see comma notes to determine when commas are needed with these

### FRAGMENTS

Fragments are incomplete thoughts that can NOT stand on their own. Sometimes fragments are referred to as dependent clauses. **Generally starting a sent w/ so will create a fragment. This is a very common error.**

Sometimes you can make fragments a complete thought or a complete sentence by

- 1) joining them with the previous or following sentence IF the fragment and sentence are closely related and they “fit” together (see Comma Notes section of this handout on information of how to punctuate)
- 2) deleting the first word that is making it an incomplete thought (so, although, because, etc.) Sentences that start with such words are NOT necessarily fragments. They can be a complete thought **IF** they are joined with an independent clause.
- 3) Otherwise, add words needed to create a complete thought.

**EXAMPLE:** Because we studied hard. (fragment)  
Because we studied hard, we did well on the test.  
(sentence)

## COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

**IF YOU ARE USING A COORDINATING CONJUNCTION TO JOIN TWO COMPLETE INDEPENDENT CLAUSES THEN YOU ALWAYS USE A COMMA.** Coordinating conjunctions include (AND, BUT, OR, YET)

## SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

With a subordinating conjunction to join two independent clauses it varies if you need a comma or not. Subordinating conjunctions include (BECAUSE, AFTER, ALTHOUGH, AS LONG AS)

- 1) If the DEPENDENT clause comes FIRST (meaning your subordinating conjunction STARTS the sentence) then you NEED a COMMA
- 2) If the INDEPENDENT clause comes FIRST (meaning the subordinating conjunction is found in the middle of the sentence) then you DON'T need a comma

### **EXAMPLES:**

Because Jerry is small. (fragment / dependent clause)

Because Jerry is small, he was an easy target for the Vigils.  
(dependent clause FIRST w/ independent clause second – comma needed)

Jerry was an easy target for the Vigils because he is small.  
(independent clause comes FIRST w/ dependent clause second – NO comma needed)

IF the dependent clause comes BEFORE the independent clause a comma is needed. You can hear a pause. See examples above and below.

### **MORE EXAMPLES:**

Because the Vigils were a gang, few people talked about them.  
(comma needed because the dependent clause comes first)

Few people talked about the Vigils because they were a gang.  
(comma NOT needed because the independent clause comes first)

\*\*\***Helpful Tip:** When the word because starts the sentence, a comma IS NEEDED.  
When the word because is in the middle of the sentence, NO comma.

**KEEP THIS! Go online under the grammar links for practice on these concepts. Click on Fragments and Run Ons AND Complex Sentences.**