

Run On Sentences

Run on sentences are the complete opposite of fragments. Run on sentences are normally lengthy sentences that contain too many subjects and verbs. In order to properly understand run on sentences, we need to review a few details about clauses.

There are two types of clauses – independent clauses and dependent clauses. An independent clause is a clause that can stand alone. An independent clause can be a sentence on its own or it can be part of a larger sentence. A dependent clause can not stand alone. It is dependent upon the rest of the sentence in order to form a complete thought.

Independent clauses:

Robyn is a teacher, and she teaches English.

Robyn is a teacher; she teaches English.

Robyn is a teacher. She teaches English, and she coaches the volleyball team.

The first two sentences above are made up of two independent clauses. The first independent clause is “Robyn is a teacher.” The second independent clause is “she teaches English.” Each of these clauses could be a sentence. Rachel is a teacher. She teaches English. Most run on sentences are caused by having multiple independent clauses that are connected improperly. The two independent clauses in our first example are connected by a comma and a conjunction (the word *and*). In our second example, they are connected by a semicolon.

Our last example includes three independent clauses: Robyn is a teacher, she teaches English, and she coaches the volleyball team. If we had said *Robyn is a teacher and she teaches English and she coaches the volleyball team*, we would have a run on sentence. Punctuation and conjunctions are necessary in order to break up the clauses into correct sentences.

Dependent clause:

Robyn, an English teacher, coaches volleyball.

In the above sentence, “an English teacher” is a dependent clause. If you were to read “an English teacher” without reading the rest of the sentence, you would not have a complete thought. What about an English teacher? “An English teacher” would be considered a dependent clause because it depends on the rest of the sentence in order for the meaning of the clause to be clear.

Name _____

Date _____

Run On Sentences Questions

Are the following sentences run on sentences (write “Y” if it is a run on sentence and “N” if it is NOT a run on sentence):

_____ 1. He went to the store and got a loaf of bread and then he ate it.

_____ 2. She does not like the color red, nor does she wear red clothes.

_____ 3. The cat is fluffy; he is an old cat.

_____ 4. While walking down the street, Roy saw a car accident; no one was hurt.

_____ 5. They were friends for five years but got into a fight and they do not talk to each other anymore unless they are arguing.

Underline the independent clause (or clauses) in the sentences below:

6. Since she likes candy, he brought her a candy bar.

7. The teacher is always fair, even when the class is rowdy.

8. Nancy runs every day, and she eats healthy foods.

9. While on vacation, Peter went scuba diving.

Underline the dependent clause (or clauses) in the sentences below:

10. As soon as he gets home, he takes off his shoes.

11. In winter, birds are scarce.

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Run On Sentences Answers

Are the following sentences run on sentences (write “Y” if it is a run on sentence and “N” if it is NOT a run on sentence):

__Y__ 1. He went to the store and got a loaf of bread and then he ate it.

__N__ 2. She does not like the color red, nor does she wear red clothing.

__N__ 3. The cat is fluffy; he is an old cat.

__N__ 4. While walking down the street, Roy saw a car accident; no one was hurt.

__Y__ 5. They were friends for five years but got into a fight and they do not talk to each other anymore unless they are arguing.

Underline the independent clause (or clauses) in the sentences below:

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