

STOPPING RUN-ONS

GRADES 4 - 12

Center(s)

Writer's Craft, Grammar, Reading Together

Skills

Students gain practice in revising and editing while reinforcing their understanding of punctuation and capitalization. In order to complete the task, they have to do simple textual analysis of the supplied “run-on” sentence in order to make the correct editing choices.

Description

Students edit one long, run-on sentence to create a series of shorter, grammatically-correct sentences.

Mini-Lesson

Review the definition of complete, grammatically-correct sentences. Compare them to run-on or fused sentences. Model the tools writers can use to repair run-on sentences: commas, semicolons, commas with appropriate conjunctions – or run-ons can just be divided up into shorter sentences by adding periods and capitalization.

If you're unsure of what a run-on sentence is, check out any grammar website. I especially like Mignon Fogarty (Grammar Girl) for her “quick and dirty tips” and easy-to-understand explanations.

Overview and Tips for Classroom Implementation

This is one of my favorite center activities because:

- It combines active reading with grammar skill reinforcement.
- It reminds students of the importance of clearly written communication in all subject areas.
- It encourages students to read content closely, while paying attention to the meaning of each individual sentence.
- It's easily adapted to both ELA and content-area classrooms!

All you need is a sample text that includes run-on sentences. You can write these yourself, adapt them from texts that relate to your content, or re-write texts that your students are already studying. You could even choose a passage from a textbook and rewrite it to include run-on sentences.

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The sample Literacy & Learning Center activity below shows how this grammar activity was adapted for use in a 5th grade Social Studies class. The teacher wrote this run-on sentence herself in order to reinforce one of the unit's most important themes.

Team: Mike Tessa Moe

This is a run-on sentence:

Lewis and Clark's team opened the way for the colonization of the western United States their maps and journals helped other explorers and settlers move west.

Write two grammatically correct sentences:

Lewis and Clark's team opened the way for
the colonization of the western United States.
Their maps and journals helped other
explorers and settlers move west.

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The sample Literacy & Learning Center activity below shows how this grammar activity was adapted for use in a high school Environmental Science class. In this case, the student teams were asked to make their punctuation/capitalization notations directly on a supplied handout.

AS A GROUP

- **Read** the following paragraph about sea level rise on Pacific coast. It consists of one, long, run-on sentence!
- **Add punctuation and capitalization** to change the run-on into three complete sentences.

OPTIONAL

- If you want to read the rest of the article individually - at home or during free reading time - it will be bookmarked on the classroom web page. By the way, the real article is very well written and doesn't contain any run-ons!

NEWSWAVE - News from the U.S. Department of the Interior, Winter 2016

"Marshes to Mudflats—New Study: By 2110 Sea-Level Rise Will Drown Most Wetlands Along Oregon and Washington Coasts" by Karen Thorne, Ryan McClymont (USGS)

Tidal marshes provide habitat for endangered wildlife and protect coastal communities from flooding. ^Aa new report from the USGS suggests that Oregon and Washington may lose most of these habitats in the next century. ^Aalthough their models showed most marshlands will remain during the next 50–70 years, scientists predict that none of the wetlands will build up enough sediment to outpace sea-level rise and consequently will convert to mudflats by 2110.

https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/NEWSWAVE_Winter2016.pdf#page=8