

RUN-ON SENTENCES AND COMMA SPLICES

#6

A run-on sentence happens when you run two (or more) complete statements together without proper punctuation or wording to join them correctly.

Examples of run-ons:

- At first, Little Red-cap couldn't even be trusted to stay on the path by the end of the story she is more focused and resourceful.
- Oscar Wilde's fairy tales bring up problems that exist in the real world however society is slow to recognize them.

A comma splice is a variation on the run-on, which consists of running the two (or more) complete statements together, but this time using only a comma to separate them. The comma is not a strong enough piece of punctuation for such a huge job—joining complete statements with only a comma is like trying to hold steel girders together with twist-ties.

Examples of comma splices:

- At first, Little Red-cap couldn't even be trusted to stay on the path, by the end of the story she is more focused and resourceful.
- Oscar Wilde's fairy tales bring up problems that exist in the real world, however society is slow to recognize them.

To fix run-ons and comma splices, you have at least four options (and even more variations within those options):

1. **Use a period** to end the sentence.
 - At first, Little Red-cap couldn't even be trusted to stay on the path. By the end of the story, she is more focused and resourceful.
2. **Use a semicolon** instead of a comma to separate the two sentences.
 - Oscar Wilde's fairy tales bring up problems that exist in the real world; however, society is slow to recognize them.
(Note: The conjunctive adverb *however* is helpful here, but it does not correct the run-on. The semicolon does that.)
3. **Use a coordinating conjunction** (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*) **with the comma**.
 - At first, Little Red-cap couldn't even be trusted to stay on the path, **but** by the end of the story she is more focused and resourceful.
4. **Use a subordinating conjunction** (words like *although, even though, since, because, so that, whereas*, etc.) to join the two sentences together.
 - **Even though** Oscar Wilde's fairy tales bring up problems that exist in the real world, society is slow to recognize them.
 - At first, Little Red-cap couldn't even be trusted to stay on the path, **whereas** by the end she is more focused and resourceful.