**Sentence Workshop**

# **Main clause vs. Sentence fragment**

A **main (independent) clause** is a group of related words with a subject and a verb that can stand alone as a sentence. 

Ex. *The grouchy black bear wrecked the hillbilly's whiskey still.*

A **sentence fragment** (incomplete sentence) is a group of words that does not contain a complete main clause (missing a subject or verb) or does not express a complete thought.

Ex. *Dug huge holes in the backyard.* This is not a complete main clause because there is no subject. Who dug?

Ex. *While Bertha hiked through the Everglade.* This sentence does not express a complete thought.

**Exercises** - Determine if the following sentences are complete or fragments (incomplete). Change the fragments into sentences.

1. Standing at the end of the line.
2. Elvis was sighted in the peanut butter aisle at Safeway.
3. But never listens to instructions.
4. Whenever Egbert turns on the computer.
5. And will attend clown workshops in the spring.
6. The eggplant stew is two days old, and it wasn't very good on the first day.
7. The stabbing pain.
8. The Druid priests worshipped trees.

**The Compound Sentence** – avoiding comma splices and fused sentences

When two main clauses (two complete sentences) are joined together to form one sentence, the sentence is called a **compound sentence**.

There are two ways to create a compound sentence:

# Use a **coordinating conjunction** (FANBOYS = for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) with a comma.

Ex. Zsa Zsa Gabor brutally attacked a policeman**, but** she didn't serve much time.

# 2. Use a **semicolon**

Ex. Madge threw off the headphones in disgust**;** she just didn't understand the appeal of Pearl Jam.