

I. COMMA SPLICE LESSON (adapted from Purdue OWL)

A comma splice occurs when two independent clauses are connected with only a comma. As with a run-on sentence, there are a few different ways to correct a comma splice. Consider the following sentence and the revised versions that follow it.

Comma Splice: My family bakes together nearly every night, we then get to enjoy everything we make together.

Correction 1: My family bakes together nearly every night. We then get to enjoy everything we make together.

Explanation 1: The comma splice has been corrected by breaking the sentence into two separate sentences.

Correction 2: My family bakes together nearly every night, and we then get to enjoy everything we make together.

Explanation 2: The comma splice has been corrected by adding a coordinating conjunction and a comma.

Correction 3: After my family bakes together nearly every night, we get to enjoy everything we make together.

Explanation 3: The comma splice has been corrected by adding a subordinating conjunction and a comma.

Correction 4: My family bakes together nearly every night; we get to enjoy everything we make together.

Explanation 4: It is acceptable to join two independent clauses with a semicolon if they are closely related in meaning or context. Sometimes the semicolon is followed by a conjunctive adverb (i.e. however, therefore).

II. PAST TENSE LESSON

Critical analyses of essays, fiction, or other forms of art are normally written in present tense and active voice. Past and continuous tenses should be used sparingly in critical writing. These other tenses are normally used in two situations: (1) when your focus shifts away from the text or artwork to external questions about history, or (2) when the voice of the narrator makes reference to a past event, completed action, or conditional possibility.

Inconsistent verb tense: Changez feels alienated when airport security searched him upon arriving in the US.

Corrected: Changez feels alienated when airport security searches him upon arriving in the US.