Sentence Types

A complete sentence contains at least two parts:
- *Subject*
- *Verb*

More complicated sentences may also include:
- *Phrases* (i.e. prepositional phrases beginning with "in," "of," or "for")
- *Clauses* (i.e. relative clauses such as "which" clauses)

Sentences fall into three main types:
- *Simple sentence*
- *Compound sentence*
- *Complex sentence*

Use these different types of sentences to make your style more varied.

- **Simple sentence:** A **simple sentence** contains **one subject** and **one verb**:

  Martin Luther King Jr. died in 1968.

Subject	Verb	Prepositional Phrase
Martin Luther King, Jr.	*died*	*in 1968.*

Simple sentences can also take an **object** (the thing begin acted on):

  Martin Luther King, Jr. led the Civil Rights movement.

Subject	Verb	Object
Martin Luther King, Jr.	*led*	*the Civil Rights movement.*

- **Compound sentence:** A **compound sentence** joins together **two complete simple sentences** with a **comma** and **conjunction** (i.e. "and," "but," or "or"):

*Martin Luther King, Jr. led the movement, **but** many southern whites opposed him.*

Subject 1	Verb 1	Object	Comma + Conjunction	Subject 2	Verb 2	Object
Martin Luther King, Jr.	*led*	*the civil rights movement.*	*, but*	many southern whites	*opposed*	*him.*

- **Complex sentence:** A **complex sentence** begins with a word like "although," "if" or "because." A **complex sentence** contains **one complete** simple sentence (called the "independent clause," and **one incomplete** simple sentence (called the "dependent" clause because it *depends* on the other clause to complete the thought). Use a comma to join the two clauses.

Though Martin Luther King, Jr. died in 1968, he inspires many today.

Dependent Clause	Comma	Independent Clause
Though Martin Luther King, Jr. died in 1968	,	he inspires many today

The complex sentence can also be flipped around:

Martin Luther King, Jr. inspires many today, though he died in 1968.

Independent Clause	Comma	Dependent Clause
Martin Luther King, Jr. inspires many today	,	though he died in 1968.