

Tasty Sentences

Understanding and Constructing
Different Types of Sentences



What is a sentence?

A sentence can be defined as a group of words that expresses a complete thought.

But what exactly is a
“complete thought”???

A sentence must have
at least one **subject**
(the who or what the sentence is about)
and at least one **verb or verb phrase**
(a word(s) that shows action
or state of being
or links the subject
to another word in the sentence).

So a “**complete thought**”
could be defined as...

A **who** or **what** +

1- an **action** (of the who or what) or

2- a **state of being** (of the who or what) or

3- a **link** to another word in the sentence
(having to do with the who or what)

= a **complete thought**

Examples:

subject verb
The soccer **ball** | **flew** out of the field.
what + action of the what

subject verb
Megan | **is** excited about the trip.
who + state of being of the who

subject verb
Jimmy's **locker** | **smells** funny.
what + link to information about the what



So groups of words that have only a subject,
or only a verb, or neither a subject
nor a verb, are not sentences, but
sentence fragments.

Examples:

subject

Most **children** of Colorado. (no verb)

verb

Love to go. (no subject)

prepositional phrase

To the zoo. (no subject, no verb)

The subject and all the words that modify it are called the **complete subject**.

The main verb/verb phrase and all the words that modify it are called the **complete predicate**.

	subject		verb	
<u>Red pizza</u>	<u>sauce</u>		<u>dripped down his chin.</u>	
complete subject			complete predicate	

The noun or pronoun
a sentence is about
is called the **simple subject**.
The main verb/verb phrase
is called the **simple predicate**.

	noun		verb	
Red pizza	sauce		dripped	down his chin.
	simple subject		simple predicate	

Sentences can have
a simple subject and/or a simple predicate
or a **compound** (more than one) **subject**
and/or a **compound** (more than one verb) **predicate**:

noun		noun		verb
Freddie	and	Jamie		are close friends.
Compound Subject				Simple Predicate

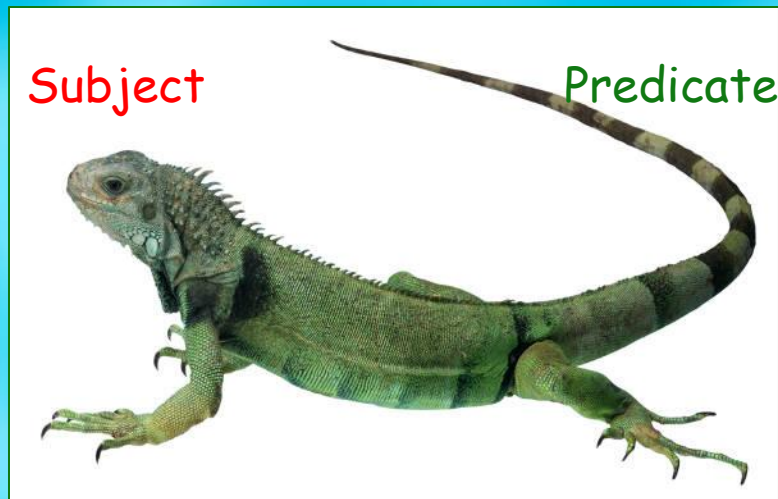
pronoun		verb		
They		sit	together in the school bus	
Simple Subject		Compound Predicate		

every morning and **walk** home together
every afternoon.

The following visuals will help you understand sentence structure.

A lizard will represent a complete sentence.

The **head** will represent the **simple subject**, and the **tail** will represent the **simple predicate**.



A simple sentence can have:

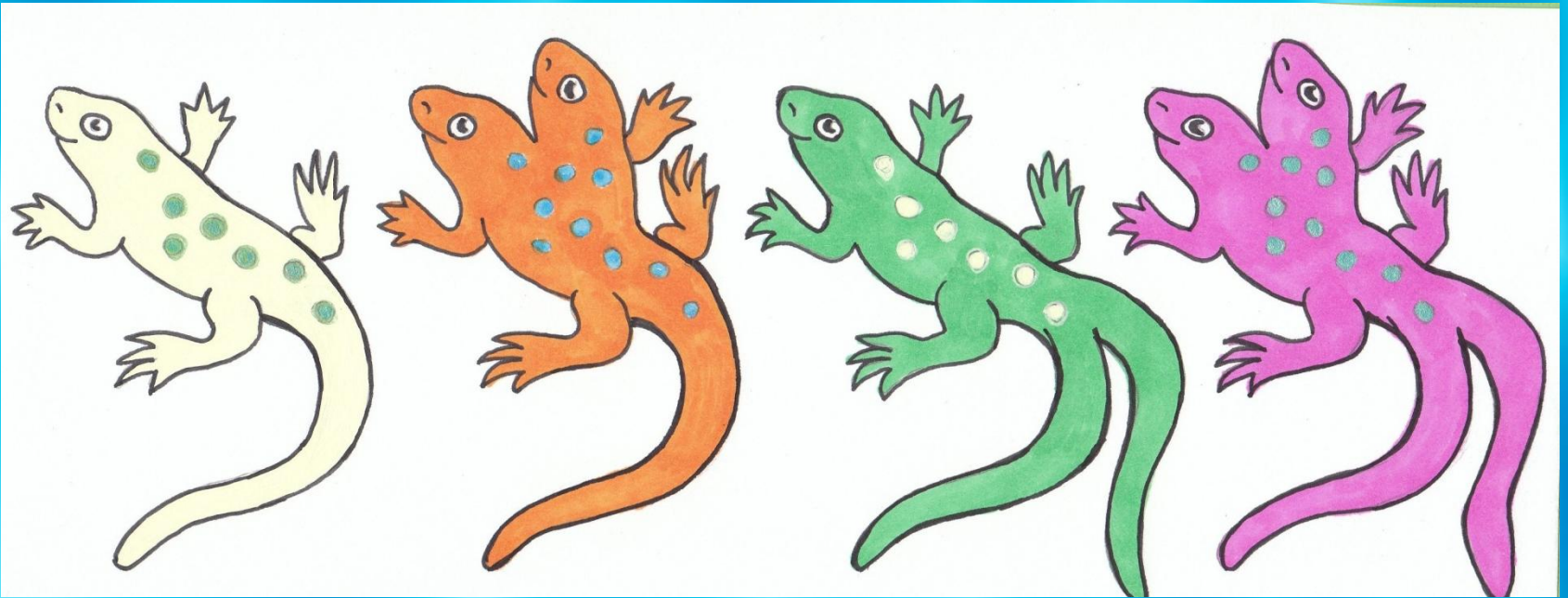
- 1- a simple subject + a simple predicate
(a lizard with **one head** and **one tail**),
- 2- a compound subject + simple predicate
(a lizard with (at least) **two heads** and **one tail**),
- 3- a simple subject + a compound predicate
(a lizard with **one head** and (at least) **two tails**), or
- 4- a compound subject + a compound predicate
(a lizard with (at least) **two heads** and **tails**).

One Subject +
One Predicate

Two Subjects +
One Predicate

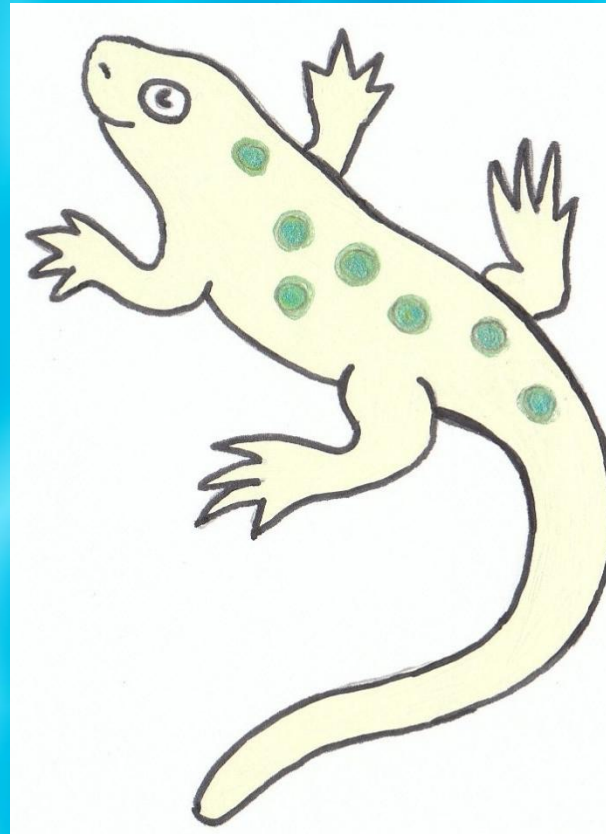
One Subject +
Two Predicates

Two Subjects +
Two Predicates



Lizards | are reptiles.

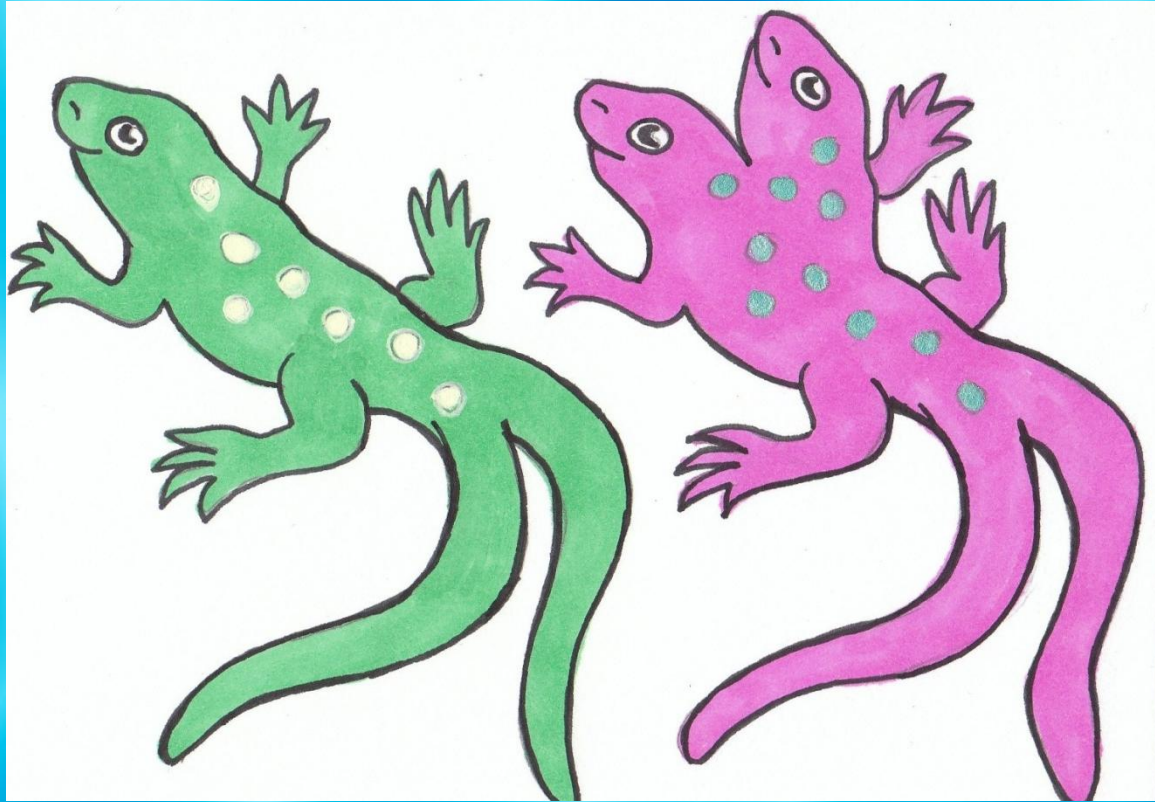
Salamanders | are amphibians.



Lizards and salamanders | have a few similar traits.



They | can stay very still and can scamper up walls.



Both Lizards and salamanders | catch and eat small insects.

Sentences themselves can be compound.

A compound sentence is formed by joining two or more simple sentences with a comma and a coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) or with a semicolon (;).

Two lizards "holding hands" can represent a compound sentence.



Compound Sentence

subject

verb

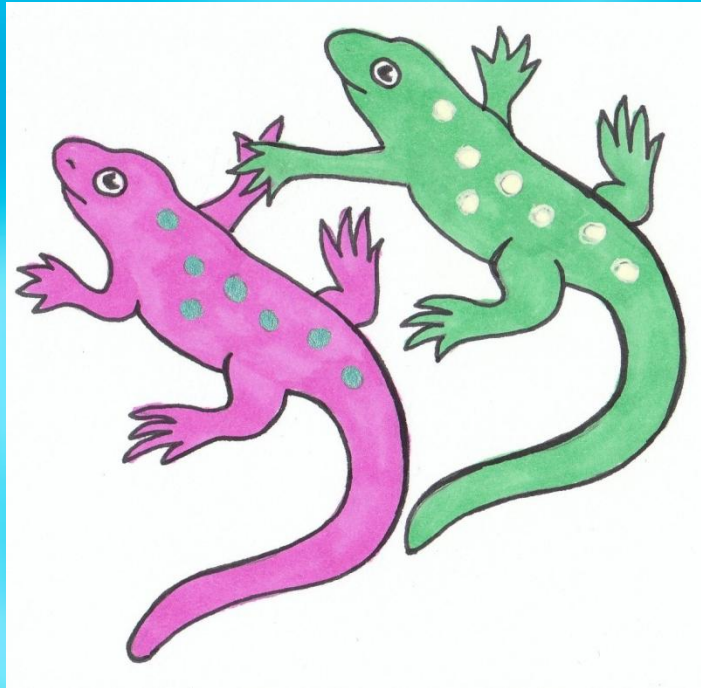
Lizards | have a long head, dry skin, and clawed feet, but

coordinating
conjunction

subject

verb

salamanders | have a rounder head, moist skin, and stumpy toes.



Introduction to Complex Sentences:

Not all groups of words with subjects and verbs make sense on their own.

"I'm wearing a sweater" is a complete thought because it makes sense on its own.

I = subject am wearing = verb phrase

But "because I'm cold" doesn't make sense on its own, so it can't be a complete thought.

I = subject am = verb

Groups of words that contain
at least one subject
and at least one verb/verb phrase,
express a complete thought
(i.e., sentences),
and make sense on their own
are known as
independent or main clauses.

Example: I'm wearing a sweater.

Groups of words that contain
at least one subject
and at least one verb/verb phrase,
but don't make sense on their own
(they need an independent or main clause)
are known as
dependent or subordinate clauses.

Example: Because I'm cold.

What happens if we join both clauses?

I'm wearing a sweater because I'm cold.

Independent Clause

Dependent Clause

or

Because I'm cold, I'm wearing a sweater.

Dependent Clause

Independent Clause

These types of sentences (independent clause + dependent clause) are called **complex sentences**.

Dependent or subordinating clauses begin with a subordinating conjunction:

after, although, as, as if, as long as, as though, because, before, if, in order that, provided that, since, so, so that, though, till, unless, until, when, whereas, while

Back to the lizards:

A complex sentence can be represented by an adult lizard (the independent clause) and a juvenile lizard (the dependent clause).

A **t-shirt** on the juvenile lizard can represent the **subordinating conjunction**.

Complex Sentence

subordinating

conjunction

subject

subject

verb

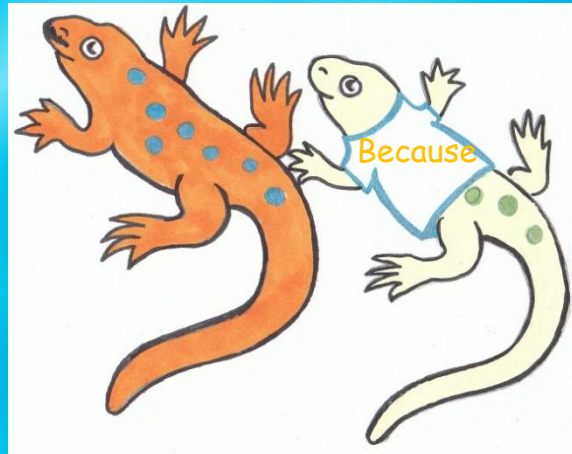
Because lizards and salamanders | are cold-blooded animals,
dependent clause

subject

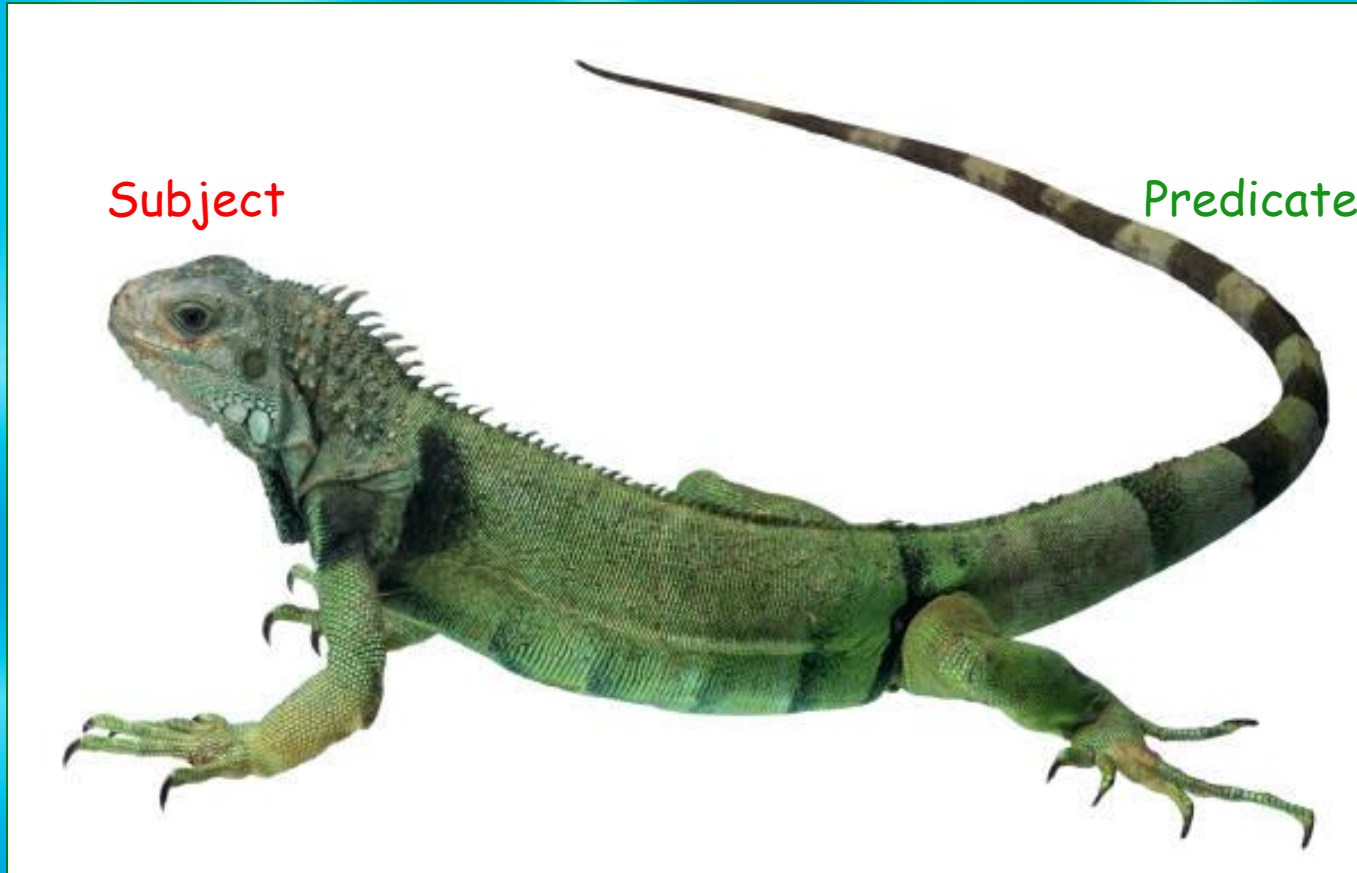
verb

they | must utilize the warmth of their surroundings to
independent clause

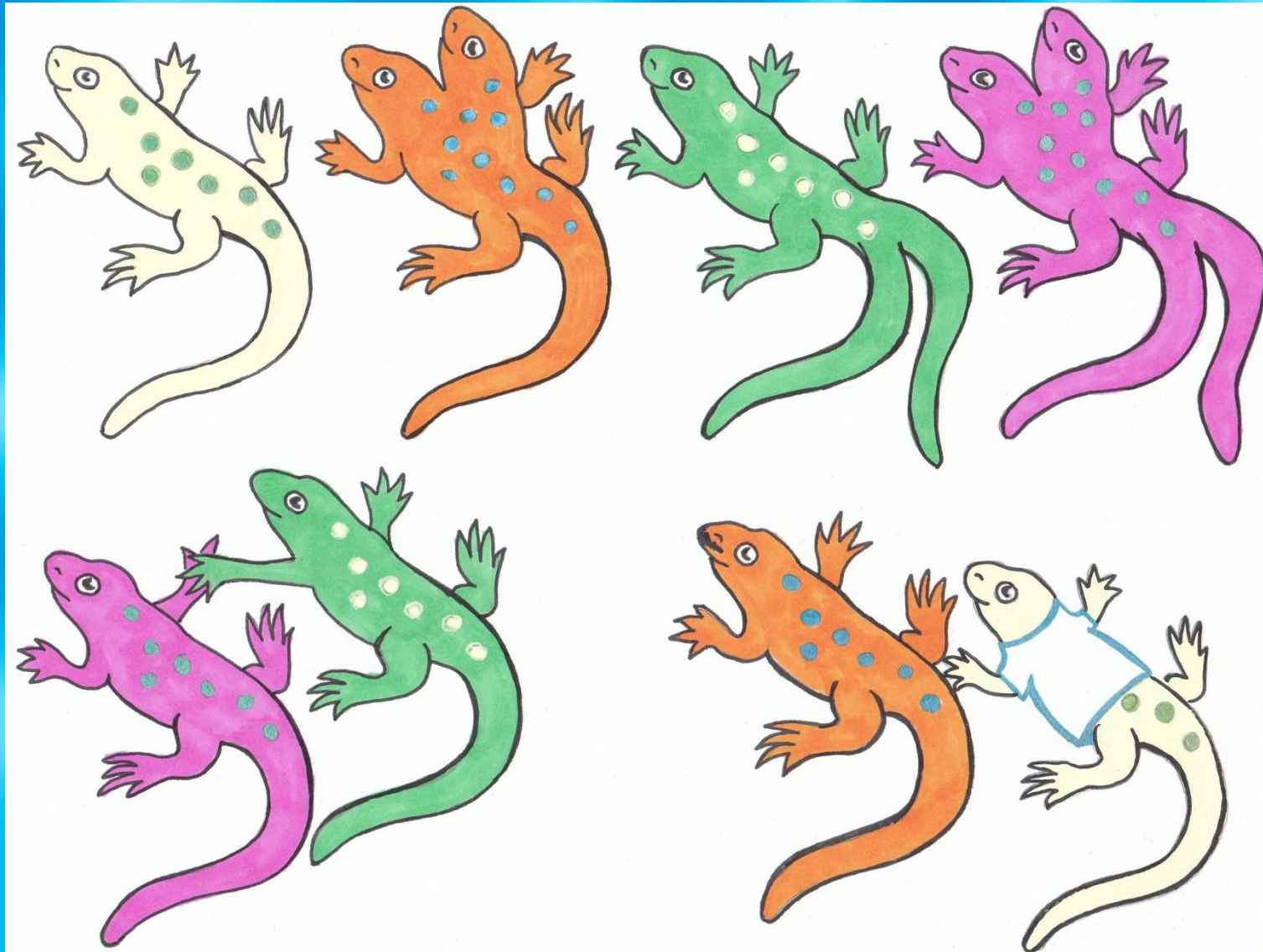
regulate their body temperature.



Let's review the lizard sentences:



Simple	One Subject +	Two Subjects +	One Subject +	Two Subjects +
Sentences:	One Predicate	One Predicate	Two Predicates	Two Predicates



Compound Sentence

Complex Sentence

Got It?



Sentence problems to spot and fix:

1- no subject-verb agreement

2- unclear pronoun antecedents

3- rambling sentences

4- run-on sentences and comma splices

5- double negatives

6- redundancy (wordy sentences)

7- lack of clarity

1- No Subject-Verb Agreement

Check to make sure that the subjects and the corresponding verbs in your sentences agree in number:

Incorrect: The **girls** **enjoys** walking their dog in the morning.

Correct: The **girls** **enjoy** walking their dog in the morning.

Hint: Most nouns that end with an *s* or *es* are plural, while most verbs that end with an *s* are singular.

2- Unclear Pronoun Antecedents

Check to make sure that your pronoun antecedents (the nouns being replaced by the pronouns) can be clearly identified.

Incorrect: The Obama ^{antecedent} girls ^{pronoun} enjoy walking his dog in the morning.

Correct: The Obama ^{antecedent} girls ^{pronoun} enjoy walking their dog in the morning.

Pronouns must agree with the nouns they have replaced in number, person, and gender.

3- Rambling Sentences

Rambling sentences are many sentences joined by the conjunction "and." Unless you are creating a special effect, you should avoid these never-ending sentences.

Example of what not to do:

My friend and I went shopping **and** we each bought a pair of really cool jeans **and** then we had lunch at Chipotle **and** later we took the Light Rail back to my friend's house **and** we watched *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* with her family **and** we had a great time.

4- Run-On Sentences and Comma Splices

A run-on sentence is two sentences that have no punctuation to separate them.

Incorrect: I love pizza my brother hates it.

A comma splice is two sentences separated by a comma but lacking a conjunction:

Incorrect: I love pizza, my brother hates it.

Correct: I love pizza, but my brother hates it.

5- Double Negatives

It is incorrect and confusing to use two negative words in a sentence.

Incorrect: I didn't do nothing.

Correct: I didn't do anything.

Incorrect: I don't want no pepperoni.

Correct: I don't want any pepperoni.

Incorrect: I can't hardly wait for the party.

Correct: I can hardly wait for the party.

6- Redundancy (Wordy Sentences)

Avoid needless words and useless repetition of words or ideas. (Repetition should only be used as a special effect.)

Incorrect: Susan **ran** and **sprinted** to the finish line.

Correct: Susan **sprinted** to the finish line.

Incorrect: I bought a new **backpack** because I was tired of my old **backpack**.

Correct: I bought a new **backpack** because I was tired of my old one.

7- Lack of Clarity

Good writers strive for clarity of meaning. Reading your sentences aloud will help you check for mistakes in language usage and word order.

Unclear:

confusing and
redundant

confusing
word order

I'm **tiring** and fed up with all the gossip **by my friends** being spread around school.

Better:

I'm fed up with all the gossip being spread around school by my friends.

Bibliography

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