

THE “YES/NO” QUESTION TEST

“Working at sentences and rhythms is probably the most satisfying thing I do as a writer.” Don DeLillo

When you are unsure if a group of words is a complete sentence, try this test.

- Reword the sentence so that it is in the form of a yes/no question.
- If the question makes logical sense, then the word group is a complete sentence.
- If the question does not make sense, the word group is not a complete sentence.
- **Note:** This test does not work with commands or questions.

Original word-group	yes/no question	Is the word group a complete sentence?
walking to the store	Is walking to the store?	This question does not make sense; therefore, no .
Julie likes cats	Does Julie like cats?	This question does make sense; therefore, yes .
the people who like reading books	Do the people who like reading books?	This question does not make sense; therefore, no .
the monkey plays in its cage	Does the monkey play in its cage?	This question does make sense; therefore, yes .