

Practice with Sentence Boundaries

You probably already know that a sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a period, question mark, or exclamation mark. This use of capitalization and punctuation indicates sentence boundaries. It lets us know where a sentence begins and where it ends.

Beginning writers sometimes have difficulty dividing up their ideas into separate sentences. Often, their writing comes out as a stream of consciousness in one long sentence. It is important that you look over your work to make sure that you have divided up long chunks of writing (run-ons) into separate sentences. You will find specific tools for fixing run-ons later in this section.

Read the following speech by Celsa Apapas, a Cupeno indigenous woman who spoke out to the American government on behalf of her people. The original text has been altered to remove sentence boundaries. Insert end punctuation and capitalization to restore these powerful words to their original form.

We Do Not Want Any Other Home

Celsa Apapas

From *Aboriginal American Oratory* by Louis Thomas Jones

we thank you for coming here to talk to us in a way we can understand it is the first time anyone has done so you asked us to think what place we like next best to this place, where we always lived you see that graveyard out there there are our fathers and our grandfathers you see that Eagle-nest Mountain and that Rabbit-hole Mountain when God made them He gave us this place we have always been here we do not care for any other place if you give us the best place in the world, it is not so good for us as this this is our home we cannot live anywhere else we were born here and our fathers are buried here we want this place and not any other there is no other place for us we do not want you to buy any other place if you will not buy this place, we will go into the mountains like quail, and die there, the old people and the women and children let the Government be glad and proud it can kill us we do not fight we do what it says if we cannot live here, we want to go into the mountains and die we do not want any other home

Celsa Apapas was fluent in three languages: her indigenous language, English and Spanish. Notice how she communicates so powerfully in the speech above using lots of simple sentences amidst more elaborate ones. May it be a reminder to you that when you have something important to say, and are clear in your thinking, simple sentences can be highly effective.

See the above excerpt in the *Readings* section for more information about Celsa Apapas and the Cupeno People.