

Lesson No. 07

Conjunctions

KEY POINTS

Conjunctions

A conjunction is a word that is used to join words, phrases, and both independent and dependent clauses in a sentence. (Although, and, because, but, if, or, while) or a phrase (as though, as well as, in order that, so that).

There are three groups of conjunctions.

Coordinating conjunctions join words, phrases, and clauses.

Subordinating conjunctions join only clauses.

Correlative conjunctions are paired conjunctions.

Coordinating Conjunctions

A coordinating conjunction is used to join together words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. There are seven coordinating conjunctions: **and, but, for, nor, or, so, and yet**. These words can be remembered by remembering FANBOYS (F = for; A = and; and so on).

For: We use **for** to express a reason or purpose. It has similar meaning as **because, since** and **as**, and can be used in place of any one of them.

Examples:

- He finds it difficult to see clearly, **for** he is partially blind.
- He left early, **for** he had to be on time for the meeting.

And: We use **and** to add one thing to another.

Examples:

- They kicked **and** punched him. (Connecting words)
- The mother bought her a strawberry ice cream **and** a bear lollipop. (Connecting phrases)

Nor: We usually use **nor** before the second negative after the first one. We can also use it as the last of a set of negatives.

Examples:

- The audience was not very impressed by their performance, **nor** their jokes.
- I notice your socks are never washed, **nor** your car.

But: We use **but** to introduce an additional phrase or clause that is different from what has already been mentioned.

Examples:

- He accidentally stepped on a dog's tail **but** didn't get bitten.
- There were only small beans in the soup **but** delicious.

Or: We use **or** to show alternatives or different possibilities.

Examples:

- We can go now **or** when it stops raining.
- Is that beef **or** mutton in the curry?

Yet: We use **yet** to add something surprising because of what has just been mentioned.

Examples:

- He is only a little boy, **yet** he is able to carry such a heavy load.
- I arrived there half an hour late, **yet** no one else had turned up.

So: We use **so** to mean **for this reason**. It has similar meaning as **therefore**.

Examples:

- The rain got heavier, **so** the match had to be abandoned.
- His neighbor threatened to burn her house down, **so** she made a police report.

Avoid repeating unnecessary words when using conjunctions

Examples:

- The unlined words can be avoided as unnecessary.
- You need to know what rights you have. You also need to know how to use them.
- You need to know what right you have **and** how to use them.
- This is an expensive machine. It is an immensely useful machine.
- This is an expensive **but** immensely useful machine.
- We didn't believe a word he said. None of us believe his excuses as well.
- We didn't believe a word he said, **nor** his excuses.
- You can choose the white one. You can also choose the black one.
- You can choose the white one **or** the black one.

Subordinating Conjunctions

A **subordinating conjunction** is a word that introduces a subordinate clause which cannot form a sentence on its own. The subordinating conjunction connects the subordinate clause, also called a dependent clause, to an independent clause to form a sentence.

The following examples show subordinate clauses in bold. Each subordinate clause always begins with a subordinating conjunction. The rest of each of the sentences not in bold is the independent clause, also called the main clause.

Examples:

- These girls are already drunk **although they have drunk only a little**.
- We had a bag of popcorn for dinner **because we had nothing else to eat**.
- It's urgent that something be done **before more villagers are trampled to death by the elephants**.
- She has aged a lot **since the last time we met**.
- The whole ostrich-rearing business will fail **unless we put in more money**.
- My kitchen roof leaked **whenever it rained**.
- **Even though she is quite fat**, she can run quickly upstairs.

As can be seen, the above subordinate clauses are introduced by subordinating conjunctions: **although, because, before, since, unless** and **whenever**. A subordinating conjunction can come in more than one word as shown in the last example: **even though**. A subordinate conjunction can come at the beginning of a sentence. But the subordinate clause must not be used independently as a complete clause or a sentence.

More examples of subordinating conjunctions: after, as, if, lest, now, once, provided, supposing, than, though, till, until, when, where, whereas, wherever, whether, while

Subordinating conjunctions of more than one word: as long as, as much as, as soon as, as though, even if, if only, in order that, just as, now that, provided that, rather than, so that,

An independent clause can be turned into a subordinate clause

Examples:

- I was very angry with him. I punched him on his nose. (Two independent clauses)
- I was very angry with him, **so I punched him on his nose**.
- (An independent clause is now a subordinate clause shown in bold).
- Correlative Conjunctions

Correlative conjunctions as mentioned earlier are paired conjunctions, which means they do not come in single words. They come in the form of pairs of words: **either ... or; neither ... nor; both ... and; not only ... but also,** and **whether ... or**. The correlative conjunctions connect two words, phrases or clauses.

Examples:

- You can buy **either** this chick **or** that duckling.
- They claimed what they saw were **neither** humans **nor** monkeys.
- **Both** he **and** his brother are joint leaders of the street gang.
- He stole **not only** a car **but also** two motorbikes.
- I could not decide **whether** to marry her **or** her sister.

Either ... or / neither ... nor

When using **either ... or** or **neither ... nor**, ensure that the verb agrees with the subject that is closer to it. This means if the two subjects are singular, the verb is singular; and the verb is plural if both subjects are plural. But if one subject is singular and the other one is plural, the verb can be singular or plural depending on the subject closer to it.

Examples:

- Either John or **Johnny** plays as goalkeeper in the match.
- Neither he nor his **brother** wants to be the goalkeeper.
- Either the boys or the **girls** have to perform first.
- Neither the children nor their **parents** were late for the performance.
- Either the manager or the **players** are blamed for the poor performance.
- Either the players or the **manager** is blamed for the poor performance.
- Neither the players nor the **manager** is criticized for the loss.
- Neither the manager nor the **players** are criticized for the loss.

Examples:

- **No:** I like the rainbow **not only** is it of different colours **but also** it curves.
(The first part uses a prepositional phrase [of different colours], while the second part uses a verb [curves]. It will be correct to have both parts grammatically parallel.)
- **Yes:** I like the rainbow **not only** is it of different colours **but also** it is of curved shape.
(Now both are prepositional phrases: **of different colours** and **of curved shape**.)

Error to avoid

Examples:

- **No:** I couldn't go **neither** by bus nor by train.
(Neither is a negative word. It's wrong to add another negative word **couldn't**. Two negative words make the sentence positive.)
- **Yes:** I could go **neither** by bus nor by train.

Connecting Conjunctions

When using conjunctions in a sentence, ensure the words, phrases or clauses have the same grammatical structure.

Conjunctions connect same parts of speech

Examples:

- I have a **brother** and a **sister**. (Noun linked to noun)
- We **joked** and **laughed**. (Verb to verb)
- She is **tall** and **beautiful**. (Adjective to adjective)
- He often eats **quickly** and **noisily**. (Adverb to adverb)

Conjunctions connect words

Examples:

- We bathe our **dog** and **cat** in the same tub.
- **Gorillas** and **chimpanzees** are primates.
- **Gorillas** and **chimpanzees**, but not **monkeys**, are primates.
- The giraffe was **tall** but **skinny**.

Conjunctions connect phrases

Examples:

- The fisherman is **carrying a bucket full of fish** and **walking cheerfully along the beach**.
- They were **full of smile** and **happiness** together as they went up to receive the awards.
- I like **watching TV** and **eating popcorn** at the same time.
- He likes **listening to ghost stories** but not **visiting haunted places**.

Conjunctions connect clauses

In joining clauses we leave out some words:

Examples:

- We went closer. We were able to see it better.
- We went closer **and** were able to see it better.
- The zoo has two hippos. It also has two giraffes.
- The zoo has two hippos **and** two giraffes.
- She is friendly. She is not very considerate.
- She is friendly **but** not very considerate.
- Will you have a coffee? Or will you have a tea?
- Will you have a coffee **or** tea?
- Conjunctions Function as Preposition, Adverb, or Adjective
- A conjunction can be a preposition, an adverb, or an adjective. It depends on its use in a sentence. Care is required to ensure its correct use when constructing a sentence.

Examples:

- Eat slowly **before** you choke again. (**Conjunction**)
- We went to bed **before** the explosion. (**Preposition**)
- The parents had a big fight twice **before**. (**Adverb**)
- He fell into a river, **but** a passerby rescued him. (**Conjunction**)
- She was a brilliant student **but** talkative. (**Preposition**)
- Colourful and fragrant flowers were on sale that included roses, tulips, and carnations, to name **but** a few. (**Adverb**)
- We must sleep now **as** we have to get up before sunrise. (**Conjunction**)
- This is a photo of him **as** a prisoner. (**Preposition**)
- His new puppy is **as** black as charcoal. (**Adverb**)

Conjunction can be another part of speech

Examples:

- He couldn't even sign his cheque, **for** he was completely drunk. (**Conjunction**)
- His grandchildren booked a coffin **for** him when he fell into a coma. (**Preposition**)
- Her husband had an affair with a colleague, **so** his wife did the same with her boss. (**Conjunction**)
- She hates her nosy neighbour and so does her husband. (**Adverb**)
- The rumour was about aliens out to kidnap the President, but that was not **so**. (**Adjective**)
- More on Conjunctions

Choosing the right conjunction is important to make the meaning clear.

Examples:

- He is intelligent **but** hardworking.
- He is intelligent **and** hardworking.
- (Since the conjunction **and** connect similar ideas, it should be used in the above sentence.)

Examples:

- I have always been weak in mathematics **and** I have never failed a test.
- I have always been weak in mathematics, **but** I have never failed a test.
- (**But** is more appropriately used because the two sentences above have opposite ideas.)

When 'and' is used to connect two words or phrases in a sentence, no comma is used. Commas are used when there are three or more items in a sentence.

Examples:

- I had bacon and an egg.
- I had bacon, a toast, and an egg.

We can start a sentence with a conjunction, or place it in the middle of the sentence. A comma is used when a conjunction introducing a subordinate clause comes before the main clause as shown here. The subordinating conjunctions are in bold.

Examples:

- If he is not here soon, we shall leave without him.
- We shall leave without him **if** he is not here soon.
- **When** you see him, please talk to him about it.
- Please talk to him about it **when** you see him.
- **Although** she is my colleague, we hardly talk to each other.
- We hardly talk to each other **although** she is my colleague.
- **Because** the weather is bad, we decide not to go out.
- We decide not to go out **because** the weather is bad.
- **Before** I go to bed, I have a glass of milk.
- I have a glass of milk **before** I go to bed.
- **After** the accident, he decided to give up his job.
- He decided to give up his job **after** the accident.

(We use a comma when a conjunction introducing a subordinate clause comes before the main clause.)

The conjunction 'that'

We use the word **that** as a conjunction to introduce a subordinate clause to make a statement or provide more information. In many instances, the conjunction **that** may be left out without affecting the meaning of the sentence.

Some basic ideas of the conjunction **that**:

That as a conjunction is commonly used.

That introduces the **that-clause**.

That-clause can be the subject or object of a sentence.

That can be left out but not if it begins a clause.

The following show how the conjunction **that** is used.

Examples:

- He said **that** he was catching fish in the river.
- It is possible **that** the murderer is her own husband.
- She was so angry **that** she couldn't sleep.
- They are hoping **that** their missing dog will come home.
- It is true **that** my grandfather wrote a book about my grandmother.

The conjunction **that** introduces a **that-clause** which is a **subordinate clause**. A subordinate clause cannot stand on its own as a complete sentence.

Examples:

It is quite likely **that we will be late for the firework display**.

(That part of the above sentence in bold is a that-clause. We cannot use it as a sentence.)

Wrong: That we will be late for the firework display.

(Wrong because it is a subordinate clause, also called a dependent clause. It must be joined to a main clause to make a complete sentence. The main clause is **It is quite likely**.)

A **that-clause** can come at the beginning of a sentence as the subject or at the end of a sentence as the object.

Examples:

That he got up late does not mean he doesn't have to go to school. (Subject)

He recalled **that he had sent the letter sometime last week**. (Object)

We can leave out **that** wherever it may appear in a sentence but not if it is at the beginning.

Examples:

- **Correct:** He said **that** he would help me with my homework.
- **Correct:** He said he would help me with my homework.
- **Correct:** It is true **that** her grandmother is one hundred years old.
- **Correct:** It is true her grandmother is one hundred years old.
- **Correct:** **That** he didn't know anything about it is no excuse.
- **Incorrect:** He didn't know anything about it is no excuse.

More conjunctions:

Each is a pair of words (conjunction + that) which together is used as a conjunction.

Examples:

1. **providing/providing that** = on the condition that; if. **That** in these two sentences can be omitted.

We will be there early **providing that** we can catch the first train.

We welcome her to come along **provided that** she can stay out late.

2. **assuming that** = accept as true without proof

I think she will marry the wealthy boss's son even **assuming that** she doesn't love him.

3. **seeing that** = because; accepting the fact that

You may as well join them, **seeing that** they need another volunteer.

ETEA PAST PAPERS (Lesson No. 7 Conjunctions)

ETEA MEDICAL PAPER YEAR 2017

Q 29) Though Aleem is poor, _____ he is honest.
(a) but (b) nevertheless (c) yet (d) still

ANSWER: (c)

Q 30) Choose the correct sentence:
(a) Brazil is a populous contrary; the beache's are warm sandy and spotless clean.
(b) Brazil is a populous country; the beaches are warm, sand and spotlessly clean.
(c) Brazil is a populous country, the beaches are warm sandy spotlessly clean \\
(d) Brazil is a populous; country the beaches are warm, sandy and spotlessly clean

ANSWER: (b)

ETEA MEDICAL PAPER YEAR 2016

Q 31) Choose the correct sentence:
(a) He can speak Japanese because he was born in Canada
(b) He can speak Japanese until he was born in Canada
(c) He can speak Japanese even though he was born in Canada
(d) He can speak Japanese so he was born in Canada

HINT: The conjunction *though* meets the condition here

ANSWER: (c)

ETEA MEDICAL PAPER YEAR 2015

Q 32) Choose the correct sentence:
(a) As far as I know he bears a good moral character.
(b) So far as I know, he bears a good moral character.
(c) As long as I know, he bears a good moral character.
(d) Not that I know he bears a good moral character.

ANSWER: (a)

ETEA MEDICAL PAPER YEAR 2013

Q 33) Select the correct sentence:
(a) Farid and Javed both are good swimmers.
(b) Both Farid and Javed are good swimmers.

(c) Good swimmers are Farid and Javed both.

(d) Swimmers are good both Farid and Javed.

ANSWER: (a)