



Douglas College

Douglas College Learning Centre

CONNECTORS: USAGE AND MEANING

Types of Connectors

Connectors show the relationship between the ideas in two clauses. There are 3 kinds of connectors that we use to join clauses in sentences. They are **coordinators**, **subordinators**, and **transitions**.

Coordinators are used to join two independent clauses. The coordinators are *and*, *for*, *so*, *but*, *yet*, *or* and *nor*. Usually a comma is put before the coordinator.

Examples:

The office is closed for the next two days, but you can still phone to leave a message.

I forgot my computer disc, so I will have to hand in my assignment late.

Subordinators join a dependent clause to an independent clause. Examples of subordinators are *before*, *when*, *if*, *because* and *although*. They are used before the dependent clause. They can be used in two positions:

- 1) The subordinator and dependent clause can come before the independent clause with a comma.

When the bell rang, the students ran to the sky-train station.

- 2) The subordinator and dependent clause can come after the independent clause with no comma.

The students ran to the sky-train station when the bell rang.

Transitions are used between two independent clauses. Examples of transitions are *however*, *besides*, *nevertheless* and *furthermore*. After the first clause, use a semi-colon, then the transition, then a comma, and then the second clause.

Examples:

The students laughed; however, the instructor was not trying to be funny.

May U. Phail decided to take classes during the summer. She wanted to enjoy the city in summer; besides, she didn't have enough money to go on a trip.

Meanings for Connectors

Connectors express many different relationships between ideas. This section describes different purposes for connectors. It also lists words that show each relationship and gives examples of some of those words in use. These are the purposes for the various connectors:

- ◆ To Add Another Idea
- ◆ To Restate, Explain or Emphasize an Idea
- ◆ To Give an Example
- ◆ To Show a Choice
- ◆ To Show a Difference
- ◆ To Show the Opposite of What You Might Expect
- ◆ To Show a Similarity
- ◆ To Show a Cause or Reason
- ◆ To Show a Result or Effect
- ◆ To Show a Time Relationship
- ◆ To Show a Condition

To Add Another Idea

<u>Coordinators</u>	<u>Subordinators</u>	<u>Transitions</u>
and		furthermore moreover besides also in addition

Examples:

She loved that novel. It was exciting, and her favorite author wrote it.

I would never vote for that man for student council. He only cares about rich people; furthermore, he would do nothing to protect us against higher tuition fees.

To Restate, Explain or Emphasize an Idea

<u>Coordinators</u>	<u>Subordinators</u>	<u>Transitions</u>
		that is in other words in fact actually namely

Examples:

Students should paraphrase; that is, they should put the information in their own words.

Several students were caught plagiarizing; in fact, they copied the same essay from the internet.

To Give an Example

<u>Coordinators</u>	<u>Subordinators</u>	<u>Transitions</u>
		for example for instance to illustrate

Example:

The Amelia Douglas Art Gallery is an interesting place. For instance, one month a year it displays art created by faculty and staff from our college.

To Show a Choice

<u>Coordinators</u>	<u>Subordinators</u>	<u>Transitions</u>
or nor		

Example:

The students couldn't strike, nor could they get their tuition fees returned.

To Show a Difference

<u>Coordinators</u>	<u>Subordinators</u>	<u>Transitions</u>
but	while whereas though	in contrast on the contrary on the other hand instead however still otherwise

Examples:

He thinks 8:00 AM is an unreasonable time for class , but she thinks it's fine.

While most students hate lab assignments, Anita Newface enjoys them.

Professor Witty's classes are interesting and challenging; in contrast, Professor Standoffish's classes are dull and boring.

To Show the Opposite of What You Might Expect

<u>Coordinators</u>	<u>Subordinators</u>	<u>Transitions</u>
yet	although though even though	nevertheless admittedly even so nonetheless

Examples:

Jesse Minnitt knows he should start on his assignment, yet he's still watching TV.

Even though Clara Nett works hard, she still isn't getting good grades.

Nick L. Beer knows he needs more sleep; nevertheless, he stays up late every night playing computer games.

To Show a Similarity

<u>Coordinators</u>	<u>Subordinators</u>	<u>Transitions</u>
	just as as	similarly likewise in the same way

Examples:

Peter loves political science just as Rhonda loves English Literature.

Mae B. Knot has a great sense of humour; in the same way, her sister Dee Leerious loves a good joke.

To Show a Cause or Reason

<u>Coordinators</u>	<u>Subordinators</u>	<u>Transitions</u>
for	because since as now that as long as	

Examples:

They college cancelled all the classes on Friday, for the weather was bad.

She decided to take Psychology because she was curious about human behaviour.

To Show a Result or Effect

<u>Coordinators</u>	<u>Subordinators</u>	<u>Transitions</u>
so	so + adjective + that such + ...noun + that	as a result consequently as a consequence therefore thus hence accordingly

Examples:

He made a lot of mistakes, so he had to do the assignment again.

She was so tired that she went to bed at 8 o'clock.

He was such a good instructor that she told all her friends about him.

The drunk student made a lot of noise in the library; as a consequence, the librarians called the security guards to come and help them.

To Show a Time Relationship

<u>Coordinators</u>	<u>Subordinators</u>	<u>Transitions</u>
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	before after when whenever while as soon as until as since the moment that once	previously subsequently finally afterward meanwhile first, second, etc. after that next since then then, at first,

Examples:

She was listening to the test instructions when her cell phone rang.

She has studied the piano since she was a child.

The librarians called security; subsequently, the security guards took the drunk student outside of the campus building.

To Show a Condition

<u>Coordinators</u>	<u>Subordinators</u>	<u>Transitions</u>
Or	if even if unless when whenever	

Examples:

We need to go now, or we will be late for the final exam.

We'll have our final class party at Queen's Park unless it rains.

If it rains, we'll meet at my place, which is close to the college.

Exercise : Choosing Connectors

In this exercise, you will choose connectors that fit both the meaning of the paragraph and the punctuation given. First, read the whole paragraph to get an overall understanding of the ideas. Then do the following:

1. Consider:
 - a) What is the relationship between the ideas?
 - b) What choice/s can you use to show that relationship?
 - c) Which choice/s work with the given punctuation?
2. Write the best connector in the blank.

"Peace Prize a well-deserved honour" *

Kwangari Maathai, Kenyan deputy environment minister, won the Nobel Peace Prize in October 2004. This is a wonderful achievement. She is the first African woman to win the prize; (1) *(furthermore/ on the other hand / but)* _____, she won the prize for doing something wonderful -- protecting the environment. Preventing environmental degradation is essential to world security and world peace, (2) *(in contrast / so / actually)* _____ the recognition of the Nobel selection committee is very important. Environmentalists tend to focus on nature; (3) *(as a result / nevertheless / in fact)* _____, they must also recognize the importance of social justice and peace in protecting nature. A starving person who comes across an edible plant or animal, (4) *(for instance / besides / instead)* _____, will not pause and wonder whether it is endangered. (5) *(In the same way / On the contrary / If)* _____, those living without justice or under conditions of terror, genocide or war, must worry about survival above all. (6) *(In addition / So / Consequently)* _____, these issues must also be addressed (7) *(if / since / just as)* _____ we are to

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protect nature. Droughts, extreme weather events, expanding disease vectors and the scarcity of fresh water are some of the expected problems in the future.

These stresses will create “environmental refugees” and conflicts over natural resources. (8) (*When / On the contrary / As a consequence*) _____,

environmental issues are essential to world security and world peace.

Environmental security and national security are intricately connected. (9)

(*However / Likewise / Whereas*) _____, environmental health and public health cannot be separated.

Now, ask a Learning Centre tutor for the answer key and check your work. Discuss questions you have about the choice of connector with a tutor.

*Adapted Excerpts from Suzuki, D. (10/15/2004) "Peace Prize a well-deserved honour." Vancouver, BC: David Suzuki Foundation. Permission to adapt granted from www.davidsuzukifoundation.com.

For more work on connectors:

Learning Centre Handouts:

GR6.31 Ways to Connect Clauses in Sentences
GR6.32 Punctuation for Connecting Words

Other:

Ten Steps to Advancing College Reading Skills (second edition). Chapter Four: Transitions (pages 71-88) By John Langan (1995), Townsend Press. Learning Centre Book #R2.11