

Cohesion: linking words and phrases

(<http://library.bcu.ac.uk/learner/writingguides/1.33.htm>; 5.12.2012, 11:06))

You can use words or short phrases which help to guide your reader through your writing, and to link sentences, paragraphs and sections both forwards and backwards. Good use will make what you have written easy to follow; bad use might mean your style is disjointed, probably with too many short sentences, and consequently difficult to follow. Your mark could be affected either way.

The best way to "get a feel" for these words is through your reading. Most textbooks and articles are well-written and will probably include a lot of these cohesive devices. Note how they are used and try to emulate what you have read. Do make sure though that you fully understand their meaning: incorrect use could change completely what you're trying to say. Try to use a variety of expressions, particularly in longer pieces of writing.

Don't forget "AND"! Two short sentences are often best connected together with this little word. There follows a list of words and phrases that can be used. The list is not exhaustive, and BE CAREFUL: although grouped together, none is totally synonymous. Their position in the sentence can also vary; this is where your reading and dictionary come in.

Listing	Giving examples	Generalising
first, second, third	for example	in general
first, furthermore, finally	for instance	generally
to begin, to conclude	as follows:	on the whole
next	that is	as a rule
Reinforcement	in this case	for the most part
also	namely	in most cases
furthermore	in other words	usually
moreover		
	Result/consequence	Highlighting
what is more	so	in particular
in addition	therefore	particularly
besides	as a result/consequence	especially
above all	accordingly	mainly
as well (as)	consequently	
		Reformulation
in the same way	because of this/that	in other words
not only ... but also	thus	rather

Similarity	hence	to put it more simply
equally	for this/that reason	Expressing an alternative
likewise	so that	alternatively
similarly	in that case	rather
correspondingly	under these circumstances	on the other hand
in the same way	Deduction	the alternative is
Transition to new point	then	another possibility would be
now,	in other words	Contrast
as far as x is concerned	in that case	instead
with regard/reference to	otherwise	conversely
as for ...	this implies that ...	on the contrary
it follows that	if so/not	in contrast
turning to	Stating the obvious	in comparison
Summary	obviously	Concession (sth unexpected)
in conclusion	clearly	however
to conclude	naturally	even though
in brief	of course	however much
to summarise	as can be expected	nevertheless
overall	surely	still
therefore	after all	yet

Here are just a few examples of some of the words in action:

REINFORCEMENT

*Desktop computers are cheaper and more reliable than laptops; **furthermore**, they are more flexible.*

RESULT/CONSEQUENCE

*Prices fell by more than 20% last year. **As a result**, sales increased by 15%.*

GENERALISING

*On the whole, his speech was well received, **despite** some complaints from new members.*

CONTRAST

*The South East of the UK often has the coldest weather in the winter. **Conversely**, the North West of Scotland frequently has the mildest temperatures.*

CONCESSION

*It was a very expensive holiday, the weather was bad and the people weren't very friendly. **Nevertheless**, we would probably go back to the same place.*

Transition word exercise

Always ask yourself what the exact relationship is between the sentences or parts of sentences. Are you leading to the result of something? Are you making a deduction? Are you introducing some contradictory evidence or ideas? Your choice of word or phrase obviously depends on this. And always check in a good dictionary if you're not quite sure about a word's use or its position in a sentence. Remember that punctuation will affect what you use.

Insert the best alternative

1 Polls show that Tony Blair is the most popular Prime Minister this century. _____, there are even members of his own party who are uneasy with his approach.

In particular

However

For instance

2 There are some slight variations in temperature, but _____ 26 to 27°C should be expected.

consequently

otherwise

as a rule

3 The two main Channel Islands, _____ Jersey and Guernsey, are much closer to France than to England.

for example

namely

in particular

4 It was announced that nurses' working hours would be increased by 25%. _____, even fewer trainee nurses are expected to join the profession.

As a result

So that

Likewise

5 Sales of CDs have experienced a small but steady fall over the past 12 months. _____, vinyl records have seen an increase in their share of the market, up to 1.7%.

Above all

Correspondingly

In contrast

6 The Vice Chancellor explained that in light of the current financial climate and because of unexpected bad debts, it would be necessary to peg salary levels at their current level for all grades of staff. _____, no-one was getting a pay rise.

Nevertheless

In other words

Similarly

7 It is clear, therefore, that the situation in Brazil will improve only slowly. _____ the economic problems being experienced in Japan, the outlook is slightly more optimistic.

Furthermore

In comparison

With reference to

8 In order to try to reduce car use in the inner cities, the government has announced new restrictions on company parking spaces and _____, a new tax on individual car use.

as well as

in addition

in the same way

9 Essays must be handed in by the deadline, _____ they will not be marked.

obviously

otherwise

as a result

10 _____ it has been shown that fractures can occur at even relatively low pressures, the use of the material should not be completely discounted.

Nevertheless

Because

Even though

Transition word exercise

Answers

1 Polls show that Tony Blair is the most popular Prime Minister this century. **However**, there are even members of his own party who are uneasy with his approach.

However indicates that what follows is something of a contradiction or an exception.

2 There are some slight variations in temperature, but **as a rule** 26 to 27°C should be expected.

As a rule shows you are about to make a generalisation.

3 The two main Channel Islands, **namely** Jersey and Guernsey, are much closer to France than to England.

You are actually naming the two islands mentioned, so **namely** is used.

4 It was announced that nurses' working hours would be increased by 25%. **As a result**, even fewer trainee nurses are expected to join the profession.

The second sentence is a result or consequence of the first. *So that* must be followed by a verb.

5 Sales of CDs have experienced a small but steady fall over the past 12 months. **In contrast**, vinyl records have seen an increase in their share of the market, up to 1.7%.

The second sentence contrasts vinyl with CDs.

6 The Vice Chancellor explained that in light of the current financial climate and because of unexpected bad debts, it would be necessary to peg salary levels at their current level for all grades of staff. **In other words**, no-one was getting a pay rise.

The second sentence says the same as the first, but in a much simpler way (reformulation).

7 It is clear, therefore, that the situation in Brazil will improve only slowly. **With reference to** the economic problems being experienced in Japan, the outlook is slightly more optimistic.

The second sentence deals with a new aspect/point.

8 In order to try to reduce car use in the inner cities, the government has announced new restrictions on company parking spaces and **in addition**, a new tax on individual car use.

Reinforcement of the idea; an extra point. *As well as* must be immediately followed by a noun or verb.

9 Essays must be handed in by the deadline, **otherwise** they will not be marked.

The second part is a consequence of the first.

10 **Even though** it has been shown that fractures can occur at even relatively low pressures, the use of the material should not be completely discounted.

The idea of concession again; the second part is somewhat unexpected.