

# Handy Handouts®

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## Conjunctions "Join" Thoughts *and* Ideas

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### when but after and if/then or

*Conjunctions* are words that connect—or combine—words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. Conjunctions link thoughts and ideas in speaking and in writing. Some conjunctions are only one word, such as "and," while others are more than one word, such as "even if." Conjunctions are part of grammar (the form and function of words) and syntax (how words are put together for meaning). There are three main types of conjunctions:

**Coordinating Conjunctions** – These conjunctions coordinate or "balance" the information located on either side of it. Coordinating conjunctions include: **and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so.**

**Example:** The students have substitute teachers for both reading *and* math today.

**Subordinating Conjunctions** – These conjunctions combine a main (independent) clause that can stand alone to a subordinate (dependent) clause that cannot stand alone. Subordinating conjunctions include: **after, although, because, even if, if, since, that, though, unless, until, when, whereas, wherever, whether, while, why.**

**Example:** *After* the students finish lunch, they head out to recess.

**Correlative Conjunctions** – These conjunctions correlate or "go together" in pairs to join information that is equally important. Correlative conjunctions include: **both/and, either/or, neither/nor, whether/or, if/then.**

**Example:** *If* the students answer the bonus question correctly, *then* they will earn extra points.

### Ways to Work on Conjunctions



- **Combine sentences with conjunctions.** Give students two complete sentences. Have them combine the two sentences into one sentence by using a conjunction. Do this for spoken and written sentences.



- **Underlined conjunctions.** Have students underline conjunctions in written text. Use different reading materials, such as books, magazines, newspapers, etc.



- **Identify conjunctions by type.** Provide students with a list, or flash cards, of various conjunctions. Have them group the conjunctions by type—coordinating, subordinating, or correlative.



- **Replace incorrect conjunctions with correct ones.** Give students words, clauses, phrases, or sentences joined by an incorrect conjunction. Have them replace the conjunction with a correct one. For example—*She missed the bus either she overslept (because).*



- **Create a story using different conjunctions.** Have students make up a story that uses a minimum number of conjunctions. To increase the difficulty, have them use a minimum number of conjunctions from each type—coordinating, subordinating, and correlative. Do this for spoken and written stories.

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