



Conjunctions...What's their Function?

Conjunctions are words or types of punctuation that join clauses. Some common maladies that can be corrected by conjunctions are:

Comma Splices: Two or more independent clauses joined by only a comma.

Incorrect: *Grammar is boring, only Eric likes it.*

Correct: *Grammar is boring, **and** only Eric likes it.*

Run-Ons: Two or more independent clauses stuck together with no punctuation.

Incorrect: *Grammar is considered useless weird people are the only ones who like it.*

Correct: *Grammar is considered useless; weird people are the only ones who like it.*

Fragments: Incomplete sentences that have often been disconnected from the main clause.

Incorrect: *Grammar is liked by weird people. The ones with the thick glasses.*

Correct: *Grammar is liked by weird people: the ones with the thick glasses.*

Types of Conjunctions

Conjunctions can be broken up into two categories: coordinating conjunctions and subordinating conjunctions. Coordinating conjunctions join independent clauses, and subordinating conjunctions join at least one dependent clause.

Coordinating Conjunctions

FANBOYS: For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So. These words are *often* used with a comma.

Grammar is weird, and weird people like it.

Semicolons:

Grammar is weird; weird people like it.

Conjunctive Adverbs: Special words that are used to, among other things, join independent clauses. Use with a semicolon before and a comma after.

Some examples of conjunctive adverbs are **also, besides, hence, indeed, instead, then, thus, meanwhile, moreover, nevertheless, similarly, namely, still, anyway, beside, therefore, as**

a result, for example, for instance, in fact, of course, on the other hand, accordingly, consequently, furthermore, however, next, thereafter, certainly, incidentally.

Grammar is weird; furthermore, it gives me a reason to exist.

Correlative Conjunctions: They are much like coordinating conjunctions except they work in pairs.

Some examples are **either/or, neither/nor, not only/but also, both/and.**

***Either** you like grammar **or** you actually have a social life.*

Subordinating Conjunctions: Join clauses that are of unequal rank (i.e. dependent and independent). A clause that is introduced by one of these words is a dependent clause.

***Although** grammar is boring, a few strange people enjoy it.*

Some examples of subordinating conjunctions are **after, although, as, as if, as though, because, before, even though, if, in order that, rather than, since, so that, unless, until, when, while.**

The following paragraph contains comma splices, fragments, and run-ons. Use one of the above techniques to fix them. Sentences can be combined, divided, or used with any of the conjunctions listed above.

Dinosaurs were giant lizard-like animals, they lived more than a hundred million years ago. Some had legs like lizards and turtles, some had legs more like birds. The ones with legs like birds. Could walk easily with raised bodies. They varied in size, many were huge. The largest, the diplodocus, was about ninety feet long, equal to the distance between bases in baseball. It weighed more than ten elephants. The smallest weighed no more than two pounds and was no bigger than a chicken. Some dinosaurs ate meat, almost certainly some dinosaurs ate other dinosaurs. Used their strong claws and fierce teeth to tear at their victims. Dinosaurs were different in design as well as size. They had horns, spores, bills, armor-like plates, club-like tails, bony crests, and teeth in many sizes and shapes their heads were proportionately tiny or absurdly large. Their mouths varied. Depending on their eating habits.

Adapted from:

Lee Brandon and Kelly Brandon

Sentences, Paragraphs, and Beyond, 2nd Ed.

Houghton Mifflin Company