***Grammar Lesson 8: Coordinators and Conjunctions***

**Coordinating Conjunctions**

Coordinating conjunctions join grammatically similar elements (two nouns, two verbs, two modifiers, two independent clauses): for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so

* a coordinating conjunction joins two independent clauses, a comma is used before the coordinating conjunction (unless the two independent clauses are very short).
* Conjunctions that are not followed by non-essential elements should never be followed by commas.

And almost every tale she had told him was a chronicle of sickness, death, and sorrow. Thomas Wolfe, *You Can’t Go Home Again*, 46.

**Correlative Conjunctions : A paired** [**conjunction**](http://grammar.about.com/od/c/g/conjuncterm.htm) **(such as *not only . . . but also*) that links balanced words, phrases, and clauses.**

The elements connected by correlative conjunctions are usually [parallel](http://grammar.about.com/od/pq/g/parallelstructureterm.htm)--that is, similar in length and grammatical form.

*both . . . and*
*either . . . or*
*neither . . . nor*
*not . . . but*
*not only . . . but also*

From now onwards Animal Farm would engage in trade with neighboring farms: *no*t, of course, for any commercial purposes, *but* simply in order to obtain certain materials which were urgently necessary. George Orwell, *Animal Farm*, 66.

He had *neither* companions *nor* friends, church *nor* creed. James Joyce, Dubliners, 109.

**Subordinating conjunctions combine an independent and a dependent clause**

* "*If* everyone demanded peace instead of another television set, then there would be peace."
(John Lennon)

**Conjunctive Adverbs are adverbs which connect two clauses.**

Miss Brodie, however, had already fastened on Mary MacGregor who was nearest to her. Muriel Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 73.

She was willing to die for him, *therefore,* could he not live for her? Robert Penn Warren, *World Enough and Time*, 367.

A semicolon and a comma are used together when a conjunctive adverb separates two main clauses.

I wanted to go; however, I was too busy.

**Omission of conjunctions: The purposeful omission of conjunctions is known as the rhetorical device of asyndeton.**

The streets were empty, the slates shone purple. Sean O’ Faolain, *I Remember! I Remember*!, 18

The fog had all gone, the wind had risen. C.S. Lewis, *That Hideous Strength*, 175.

**The repetition of a conjunction is used again for emphasis and is referred to as polysyndeton.**

In the kitchen they had grits and grease and side meat and coffee for breakfast. Carson McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, 204.

**Putting into Practice**

1. How are conjunctions and conjunctive adverbs used in the following passages for transitional purposes and to help establish persuasive arguments?

We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these united Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States, that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. — And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor. Thomas Jefferson, *Declaration of Independence*, 1776.

While confined here in the Birmingham City Jail, I came across your recent statement calling my present activities "unwise and untimely." Seldom do I pause to answer criticism of my work and ideas. If I sought to answer all the criticisms that cross my desk, my secretaries would have little time for anything other than such correspondence in the course of the day, and I would have no time for constructive work. But since I feel that you are men of genuine goodwill and that your criticisms are sincerely set forth, I want to try to answer your statements in what I hope will be patient and reasonable terms.

I think I should indicate why I am here in [Birmingham](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/resources/article/annotated_letter_from_birmingham/%22%20%5Cl%20%22birmingham), since you have been influenced by the view which argues against ["outsiders coming in."](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/resources/article/annotated_letter_from_birmingham/%22%20%5Cl%20%22outsiders) I have the honor of serving as president of the [Southern Christian Leadership Conference](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/resources/article/annotated_letter_from_birmingham/%22%20%5Cl%20%22sclco), an organization operating in every Southern state, with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. We have some eighty-five affiliated organizations across the South, and one of them is the [Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/resources/article/annotated_letter_from_birmingham/%22%20%5Cl%20%22acmfhr). Frequently we share staff, educational and financial resources with our affiliates. Several months ago the affiliate here in Birmingham asked us to be on call to engage in a nonviolent direct-action program if such were deemed necessary. We readily consented, and when the hour came we lived up to our promise. So I, along with several members of my staff, am here because I was invited here. I am here because I have organizational ties here.

But more basically, I am in Birmingham because injustice is here. Just as the prophets of the eighth century B.C. left their villages and carried their "thus saith the Lord" far beyond the boundaries of their home towns: and just as the [Apostle Paul](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/resources/article/annotated_letter_from_birmingham/%22%20%5Cl%20%22apaul) left his village of Tarsus and carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to the far corners of of the Greco-Roman world, so am I compelled to carry the gospel of freedom far beyond my own hometown. Like Paul, I must constantly respond to the [Macedonian](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/resources/article/annotated_letter_from_birmingham/%22%20%5Cl%20%22macedonia) call for aid.

Moreover, I am cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial "outside agitator" idea. Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider anywhere within its bounds.

Martin Luther King, “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” 1963

B. You have a family obligation your parents want you to attend. At the same time you have an activity with friends which you would rather do. Write a paragraph giving your arguments to your parents why you should be allowed to attend the activity with your friends. Use at least three conjunctive adverbs to make your point.