

It Takes All Kinds

The three Kinds of Conjunctions

Reading and Discussion

Conjunctions are connecting words. They can join two or more **words, phrases** or **clauses** together in a sentence. Conjunctions are different from nouns because they don't name anything. They are different from verbs because they don't express an action. Conjunctions join other words together. There are three types of conjunctions:

1. Coordinating conjunctions. These conjunctions join equal parts together:

- a) words with words;
- b) phrases with phrases;
- c) clauses with clauses.

The most common coordinating conjunctions are:

- **and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet**

Let's look at some examples.

- Sam and John like to eat pizza **and** garlic bread.

The word **and** joins two sets of equal words, Sam **and** John. Pizza **and** garlic bread. Coordinating conjunctions join words that are grammatically equal: nouns with nouns, verbs with verbs, phrases with phrases. We cannot join a noun and a verb together with a coordinating conjunction.

- Laughing **and** pizza is incorrect.
- Sam **and** sneezing is incorrect.

.2. Subordinating conjunctions. These conjunctions are used to join a dependent clause to an independent clause. They can join together parts that are **unequal**. Some common subordinating conjunctions are:

- **after, as, before, for, if, than, until, when, where, whether, while**

Subordinating conjunctions connect the main part of the sentence, the independent clause, with a dependent clause that usually acts like a modifier.

- We left before the snow started.

We left is an independent clause. Even though it is a small sentence, just two words, it makes a complete thought and could stand alone.

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Before the snow started is a dependent clause. It depends on the main part of the sentence to make a complete thought.

Sometimes a group of words is used as a subordinating conjunction. The most common of these are:

- **as well as, as if, in order that, provided that, so that**
- Martin helped clean Tim's bike **as if** it were his own.

3. Correlative conjunctions. These conjunctions are used in pairs. The pair is split apart in a sentence. Some common correlative conjunctions are:

- **both/and, either/or, neither/nor, whether/or, just as/so, not only/but also**

If we use the first part of the conjunction pair, we must use the second part as well.

- **Either** you eat your spinach, **or** you will not get any ice cream.

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Activities

Activity A: Let's search for conjunctions. Underline the conjunctions in the sentences below. Write **C** for a coordinating conjunction and **S** for a subordinating conjunction.

1. _____ Max and Mike played soccer today.
2. _____ They played football after eating a pizza.
3. _____ Amy can take cheerleading or gymnastics.
4. _____ The game ended before Mark scored a touchdown.
5. _____ Sam plays football, but he also plays soccer.
6. _____ My sister, Amy, went to cheerleader camp, after the session started.

Activity B: Underline the correlative conjunctions in the sentences below. Remember to underline both parts of the conjunction pair.

1. Either you give me that cookie, or I will tell Grandma.
2. Both Sam and Mike came to the skating rink.
3. Tim lost not only his homework but also his lunch box.
4. Neither wind nor rain can keep me from playing baseball.
5. "Amber, either find your shoes or let me do it," Jane said.

Name _____

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Answer Key

Activity A

1. C Max and Mike played soccer today.
2. S They played football after eating a pizza.
3. C Amy can take cheerleading or gymnastics.
4. S The game ended before Mark scored a touchdown.
5. C Sam plays football, but he also plays soccer.
6. S My sister, Amy, went to cheerleader camp, after the session started.

Activity B

1. Either you give me that cookie, or I will tell Grandma.
2. Both Sam and Mike came to the skating rink.
3. Tim lost not only his homework but also his lunch box.
4. Neither wind nor rain can keep me from playing baseball.
5. “Amber, either find your shoes or let me do it,” Jane said.