



Joining Ideas

Adding coherence to your writing.

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Adding Coherence to Your Sentences:

When joining ideas, you are incorporating simple, short sentences into longer and more sophisticated sentences.

This is important for a few reasons:

- Joining ideas properly will make your writing flow better by allowing you to construct longer, well-crafted sentences.
- By placing longer sentences amid shorter sentences, a better *rhythm* is infused into your writing.
- Joining ideas properly can also help you show subtle relationships between ideas.

A period can be like a speed bump.



Too many periods after too many short sentences cause readers to speed up and slow down over and over again.



The jarring feeling of coming across a speed bump every fifty feet is much like reading short sentence after short sentence.

Infuse Rhythm Into Your Writing:

Two ways to join ideas and incorporate more complex structures into your writing are through *coordination* and *subordination*:

- *Coordination* shows that the ideas joined are equally important.
- *Subordination* shows that one idea is more or less important than another idea.

Coordination:



ideas joined are equally important

Subordination:



one idea is more or less important than another idea

Coordination (*both ideas are equally important*):

Use a coordinating conjunction (**FANBOYS**):



Complete sentence

, for

, and

, nor

, but

, or

, yet

, so

complete sentence.

note: make sure you place a comma before the FANBOYS.

Use a conjunctive adverb (*a.k.a. a transition*):



Complete sentence

- ; in fact,
- ; indeed,
- ; thus,
- ; however,
- ; consequently,
- ; therefore,
- ; further,

complete sentence.

Use a semicolon:



Complete sentence

;

complete sentence.

Subordination (one idea is more important):

Use a subordinating conjunction at the start of the sentence.



After

Although

As

Because

Before

If

Since

Until

Whereas

While

complete sentence,

complete sentence.

Note: a comma is needed after the phrase with the subordinating conjunction.

Use a subordinating conjunction in the middle of the sentence:

Complete sentence

after
although
as
because
before
if
since
until
whereas
while

complete sentence.



Note: no comma is needed if the subordinating conjunction is in the middle of the sentence.

Review:

Coordination shows that the ideas joined are of equal importance.

- Use a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS).
- Use a conjunctive adverb (a.k.a. a transition).
- Use a semicolon.

Subordination shows that one idea is more important than another.

- Use a subordinating conjunction at the start of the sentence.
- Use a subordinating conjunction in the middle of the sentence.

note: the idea with the subordinating conjunction is most often the idea that is less important.

Examples (coordination):

Use a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS).

I went to the store, but I forgot my wallet.

Use a conjunctive adverb (a.k.a. a transition).

It's lucky I'm with my friend John; in fact, he can help me out.

Use a semicolon.

He has money; I should ask him to loan me a few bucks.

Examples (subordination):

Use a subordinating conjunction at the start of the sentence.

Since he already owes me money, he probably won't make me pay it back.

Use a subordinating conjunction in the middle of the sentence.

He probably won't make me pay it back since he already owes me money.

Examples *(more subordination)*:

“Though music today is mostly driven by a quest to make profits for record labels, there are still some quality artists out there.”

The idea “there are still some quality artists out there” is the idea that can stand alone as a complete sentence, so it is the more important idea.

“Though music today is mostly driven by a quest to make profits for the record label” cannot stand alone as a complete sentence, so it is the less important idea. Switch it around and notice the difference:

“Though there are still some quality artists out there, music today is mostly driven by a quest to make profits for record labels.”

Notice the subtle difference in intended meaning and focus. The more important idea is now music today is mostly driven by a quest to make profits for record labels.

The idea with the subordinating conjunction is most often the idea that is less important.

Excercises

Coordination: use a FANBOYS

Christine spent fifty grand on her new car. Charlie always drives it.

Christine spent fifty grand on her new car, but Charlie always drives it.

Charlie is a mooch. He never offers to pay for anything.

Charlie is a mooch, and he never offers to pay for anything.

He asked me to go to a Laker game. I know I'll be paying for everything.

He asked me to go to a Laker game, so I know I'll be paying for everything.

Coordination: use a semicolon

Mase saved all his money. Now he can afford twenty-twos.

Mase saved all his money; now he can afford twenty-twos.

Kesha is the worst singer in the world. She needs digital enhancement.

Kesha is the worst singer in the world; she needs digital enhancement.

Coordination: *use a transitional word or phrase*

Sprewell choked his coach. He was fined and suspended.

Sprewell choked his coach; consequently, he was fined and suspended.

I won the lottery. You can find me in Costa Rica.

I won the lottery; therefore, you can find me in Costa Rica.

Subordination *use a subordinating word in the middle:*

He asked me to elope. We've only been on three dates.

He asked me to elope even though we've only been on three dates.

I need my fries animal style. There's really no other way to eat them.

I need my fries animal style because there's really no other way to eat them.

I can't run that marathon. I haven't trained properly.

I can't run that marathon since I haven't trained properly.

Subordination *start with a subordinating word:*

I went on the blind date with her. I talked with her on the phone.

Before I went on the blind date with her, I talked with her on the phone.

I don't have enough money. I can't buy that house.

Since I don't have enough money, I can't buy that house.

Spudd was only 5'5. He could dunk a basketball.

Although Spudd was only 5'5, he could dunk a basketball.

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