

Rhetorical Grammar for Expository Reading and Writing

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STUDENT VERSION

MODULE 5: GOOD FOOD/BAD FOOD

Connecting Ideas with Coordinating Words, Transitions, and Semicolons

Activity 1

Guided Composition

This activity is based on Waters and Heron, “No Lunch Left Behind”

The purpose of this activity is for you to write a paragraph on the topic of this module. Your teacher will read a paragraph while you listen, and then read it again while you take notes. You will then write your own paragraph based on what you heard using your notes.

Noticing Language

What is wrong with the following paragraph? How could it be improved?

Many nutrition experts believe the School Lunch Program can be fixed. It will require healthy food. It will require cooks. It will require kitchens to prepare it. More money will only create a larger junk-food distribution system. We need to scrap the current system. We need to start from scratch. Washington needs to give schools enough money to cook unprocessed food. Washington needs to give schools enough money to serve unprocessed foods. The food should be produced without pesticides. The food should be produced without chemical fertilizers. The food should be locally grown.

Rhetorical Grammar Concepts

The materials labeled Rhetorical Grammar Concepts are for your reference as you do the activities in this unit.

Coordinating Words that Connect Words and Phrases in a Series

Coordinating word	Meaning
and	connects two or more words or phrases that are similar

but not; neither . . . nor	contrasts one word or phrase with another word or phrase
or	indicates choice between two or more similar words or phrases

What are similar words and phrases? They are words that are grammatically the same even though their meanings are different. (Note: phrases are groups of words within sentences. They do not have a subject and verb and therefore are not a clause).

Similar nouns:	<i>meats and cheese</i>
Similar adjectives:	<i>organic and unprocessed</i> foods
Similar verbs:	schools <i>cooked</i> and <i>served</i> healthy food
Similar adverbs:	Eat <i>slowly</i> and <i>carefully</i> .
Similar verbals: (-ing, -ed, & to + verb)	<i>cooking</i> and <i>serving</i> healthy food <i>processed</i> and <i>thawed</i> junk food to <i>cook</i> and (to) <i>serve</i> healthy food
Similar phrases:	working <i>with farmers</i> and <i>with schools</i>

Activity 2

Coordinating Words that Connect Words and Phrases in a Series

This activity is based on Jane Brody, "Attacking the Obesity Epidemic by First Figuring Out Its Cause."

After studying the chart Coordinating Words that Connect Words and Phrases in a Series (above), underline the words and phrases that the coordinating words (**in bold**) connect. Notice that when the words and phrases are joined, they must be grammatically similar. (Coordinating words that join independent clauses have not been bolded.) Then circle the commas that are used to punctuate these series of words and phrases and explain the punctuation rule.

When I was growing up in the 1940s **and** '50s, I had to walk **or** bike many blocks to buy an ice cream cone. There were no vending machines dispensing candy, chips **and** soda. There were no fast-food emporiums **or** shopping malls with food courts. Nor were we constantly bombarded with televised commercials for prepared foods **and** drinks laden with calories of fats **and** sugars.

Most meals were prepared **and** eaten at home, even when both parents worked (as mine did). Eating out was a special event. “Convenience” foods were canned fruits **and** vegetables, not frozen lasagna **or** Tater Tots. A typical breakfast was hot **or** cold cereal sweetened with raisins **or** fresh fruit, not a Pop-Tart, jelly doughnut **or** 500-calorie bagel with 200 calories of cream cheese.

Before a mass exodus to the suburbs left hordes of Americans totally car-dependent, most people lived in cities **and** towns where feet served as a main means of transportation.

As more women entered the work force, the food industry, noting a growing new market, mass-produced convenience foods with palate appeal. The foods were rich in sugar, salt **and** fat, substances that humans are evolutionarily programmed to crave.

Look at the commas that are used in the series that you have underlined. When does the writer use a comma and when does she not?

Punctuation rule:

Rhetorical Purpose:

Why did Brody create so many pairs of words? What would have been the effect of using single words instead?

Rhetorical Grammar Concepts

The materials labeled Rhetorical Grammar Concepts are for your reference as you proceed with the instruction in this unit.

Connecting Independent Clauses Using Coordination

Coordination can be used to join elements within sentences--words and phrases--but it can also connect entire independent clauses.

An independent clause has a subject and a verb and expresses a complete idea. Coordination is used to connect two independent clauses when the ideas in each clause are equally important. The choice of coordinating words indicates the logical relationship between these ideas. Although writers should not rely overly on coordination, using it and using it correctly is an important skill.

Example: Each ^{main clause} idea is expressed in a main clause, ^{comma + coordinating word} (and) the

^{main clause} coordinating word comes before the second clause.

The Meanings of Coordinating Words

Coordinating word	Meaning
and	addition of equally important idea
but, yet	contrast of equally important ideas
or	choice between two equally important ideas
so	second clause is the result of the first
for	second clause is the cause of the first

Activity 3

Identifying Coordinating Words and Logical Relationships

This activity is based on Mark Bittman, “Bad Food? Tax It, and Subsidize Vegetables.”

(Circle) the coordinating word, and identify the relationship it expresses in the following sentences:

1. Our diet is unhealthy, (and) experts agree that changing it could save thousands of lives.

Logical relationship: *addition of an equally important idea*

2. A sane diet could save billions of dollars in health care costs, yet the food industry appears incapable of marketing healthier foods.

Logical relationship:

3. Are food industry leaders confused, or are they just stalling?

Logical relationship:

4. We eat 10 percent more animal products than we did a decade ago, so we could probably consume fewer triple bacon cheeseburgers.

Logical relationship:

5. The benefits of a national food program are staggering, and creating it would take enormous political will, but it’s hardly a moonshot.

Logical relationship:

6. It is true you don’t need to smoke, and you do need to eat.

Logical relationship:

When does the writer use commas in these sentences? What is the rule?

Punctuation rule:

Rhetorical Grammar Concepts

Joining and Beginning Sentences with Coordinating Words

This activity is based on Mark Bittman, “Bad Food? Tax It, and Subsidize Vegetables.”

Writers commonly begin some sentences with coordinating words, except in very formal writing. Look at paragraphs 2 – 4 of “Bad Food? Tax It, and Subsidize Vegetables,” and circle the coordinating words that join independent clauses or begin a sentence. Then answer the question about Bittman’s rhetorical purpose.

Though experts increasingly recommend a diet high in plants and low in animal products and processed foods, ours is quite the opposite, and there’s little disagreement that changing it could improve our health and save tens of millions of lives.

And—not inconsequential during the current struggle over deficits and spending—a sane diet could save tens if not hundreds of billions of dollars in health care costs.

Yet the food industry appears incapable of marketing healthier foods. And whether its leaders are confused or just stalling doesn’t matter, because the fixes are not really their problem. Their mission is not public health but profit, so they’ll continue to sell the health-damaging food that’s most profitable, until the market or another force skews things otherwise. That “other force” should be the federal government, fulfilling its role as an agent of the public good and establishing a bold national fix.

Rhetorical purpose:

- Why does Bittman begin some sentences with coordinating words and in other cases use coordinating words to join independent clauses?
- Why does he use the dash (—) after “And”? How does he punctuate the coordinating words?

Rhetorical Grammar Concepts

The materials labeled Rhetorical Grammar Concepts are for your reference as you proceed with the instruction in this unit.

Connecting Ideas Using Transitions and Semicolons

Transitions, like coordinating words, are used to connect ideas that are of equal importance. They join two separate sentences; therefore, either a semicolon or a period must be used at the end of the first sentence. Place the transition at the beginning of the second sentence and always place a comma after the transition. Transitions can also sometimes begin a sentence for additional emphasis.

Example

sentence They join transition + comma two separate sentences; therefore, either a semicolon or a period must be used at the end of the first sentence.

When the ideas in two sentences are closely related and don't require a transition to show the logical connection, the sentences can be joined simply with a semicolon.

Example

sentence The ideas in some sentences are closely related; semicolon they can be joined with just a semicolon. sentence

Using Coordination and Transitions to Express Logical Relationships		
Logical Relationship	Coordinating Words	Transition Words/ Phrases
Addition	and, not only . . . but also, both . . . and	in addition, furthermore, moreover, also, besides
Concession or Contrast	but, yet	however, nevertheless, on the other hand, still, in contrast, instead, on the contrary
Alternatives, Choice, or Option	or, nor, either . . . or, neither . . . nor	alternatively, on the other hand
Cause or Reason	for	therefore, consequently, thus, for that reason
Result	so	as a result, therefore, thus, consequently, for this reason
Condition		otherwise

Time or Sequence		then, first, second, third, finally, next, afterwards, after that, before that, meanwhile, at first, eventually
Comparison or Contrast	but	similarly, likewise, in contrast
Restatement		in other words, that is
Example, Generalization, or Conclusion		for example, for instance, in general, overall, in conclusion

Punctuation note: Transitions, like coordinating words, can begin sentences. However, when a transition begins a sentence, it must be followed by a comma.

Activity 5

Using Transitions and Semicolons to Join Clauses

This exercise is based on Mark Bittman, “Bad Food: Tax It and Subsidize Vegetables.”

Rewrite the following sentences with transitions or semicolons (make sure you use both options). Check that you have punctuated the sentences correctly. (Circle) the transition or phrase and punctuation.

1. We have experts who can figure out how “bad” a food should be to qualify and what the rate should be. Right now they’re busy calculating ethanol subsidies.

We have experts who can figure out how “bad” a food should be to qualify and what the rate should be; however, right now they’re busy calculating ethanol subsidies.

2. Right now it’s harder for many people to buy fruit than Froot Loops. Chips and Coke are a common breakfast.
3. The fast-food industry alone spent more than \$4 billion on marketing in 2009. The Department of Agriculture’s Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion is asking for about a third of a percent of that in 2012: \$13 million.
4. As a result, the percentage of obese adults has more than doubled over the last 30 years. The percentage of obese children has tripled.
5. It also appears that liquid calories provide less feeling of fullness. When you drink a soda, it’s probably in addition to your other calorie intake, not instead of it.

Activity 6

6. Scaled nationally, as it should be, the projected benefits are even more impressive. One study suggests that a national penny-per-ounce tax on sugar-sweetened beverages would generate at least \$13 billion a year in income while cutting consumption by 24 percent.

Combining Independent Clauses with Coordinating Words, Transitions, and Semicolons

This activity is based on Jane Brody, "Attacking the Obesity Epidemic by First Figuring Out Its Cause."

Combine the following sentences using coordinating words or transitions to combine clauses. Circle the transition word and punctuation. Make sure the logical relationships are appropriate, and check that you have punctuated the sentences correctly.

1. Since 1900, the energy requirements for daily life have decreased.
American weights remained stable until the 1970s.

Transition: *Since 1900, the energy requirements for daily life have decreased; however, American weights remained stable until the 1970s.*

2. The quantity of refined carbohydrates and fats in the American diet increased sharply in the 1970s.
The obesity epidemic began.

Coordination:

3. Experts reported that it would be possible to bring the weights of Americans back to 1978 levels.
Steep reductions in caloric intakes would be needed.

Transition:

4. To do this, unhealthy foods and drinks could be taxed.
Nutrition labeling could be more obvious.
Advertising junk food and beverages to children could be reduced.

Coordination:

5. Very few children are born obese.
Most American children grow up in an obesogenic environment.

Transition:

Activity 7

Writing Sentences Using Connecting Words

Using one of the articles from Good Food/Bad Food for information, in a small group write original sentences using the three connecting methods--coordination, transitions, and semicolons. (Circle) the connecting words and their punctuation, and label the kinds of connecting word or punctuation you use. Make sure that the information in your sentences is accurate and that the connecting word or phrase expresses the correct logical relationship between the ideas. Edit your sentences to be sure they are correctly formed and punctuated.

1. The American diet is unhealthy; for example, in a year the average American drinks 44.7 gallons of soda and 17 gallons of noncarbonated sweetened beverages. (transition)

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Activity 8

Editing Student Writing

This activity is based on a student proposal for how to encourage healthier eating at the writer's school.

Combine the following sentences using coordination and transitions. Make sure the logical relationships are appropriate, and check that you have punctuated the sentences correctly. (Circle) the coordinating words and transitions. Instead of combining two sentences, you may choose to begin the second sentence with a coordinating word or transition, but be sure you can explain the rhetorical purpose. You will also want to leave some short sentences since they can also be rhetorically effective.

The weight of America is really getting out of hand. What is the problem? Our country is being "drip-fed" fast food. Fast food is not healthy. Fast food is cheap. Healthy food seems to be just out of our price range. My proposal for this situation here at California High School is simple. In a recent survey 78% of the student population

said that if a healthy snack was available at nutrition break, they would in fact eat it. I have a question. Why not make it available? Our school already provides a healthy lunch. What about nutrition break? There is no healthy alternative. Kids go straight to the vending machine for a snack. The school gets money to feed its students. Investing some of that money in healthy snacks would have a positive impact on our campus. It would increase positive attitudes. It would increase overall morale. It would make school a better place to be.

Activity 9

Editing Your Guided Composition

Return to your guided composition from Activity 1.

1. Combine words, phrases, and clauses in your paragraph when appropriate, using connecting words to express the correct logical relationship between ideas.
2. You may begin a sentence with a coordinating word, but be sure you can explain the rhetorical purpose.
3. You will want to leave some short sentences since they can also be rhetorically effective.
4. Check your punctuation when you are finished.
5. Now your teacher will give you the original paragraph. Fill in the chart below for the original paragraph and for your paragraph. Did you make the same choices for combining sentences or did you combine sentences differently? Which do you prefer and why?

	Connecting word	Logical relationship
Original paragraph		
1.	, but	contrast
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

	Connecting word	Logical relationship
Your paragraph		
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		

Activity 10

Editing Your Own Writing

Select a paragraph from your proposal to encourage healthier eating at your school.

- Combine words, phrases, and clauses when appropriate, using connecting words to express the correct logical relationship between ideas.
- Instead of combining two sentences, you may choose to begin the second sentence with a coordinating word or transition for added emphasis.
- You will also want to leave some short sentences for added emphasis.
- Check the punctuation of your combined sentences.
- Put a question mark in the margin next to any connecting words, transitions, or punctuation you are unsure about.
- Exchange your paragraph with a partner and discuss any questions you have. Check with your teacher if you can't agree on an answer. Now edit the rest of your essay for connecting words, transitions, and punctuation. Add connecting words as needed.

