

Section W

Writing Skills

Linking Words, W1-W5

Linking words are the main building block of written sentences, and many issues with students' work can often be pre-empted by work in this area.

W1 emphasises the use of 'and', 'but', 'because' and 'so' as linking words and as such it could be used with elementary levels or as a review activity for higher level students.

W2 shows the importance of choosing the right linking word for the meaning you want to convey: contrast 'but' with 'so' in Question 1, for example. Students can then show their understanding of this in Questions 2 and 3 by writing sentences in context. Note that differentiating for lower level students may be necessary in Question 4 and that the use of 'because' and 'so' are interchangeable depending on the clause order.

The missing words are: but – but – because – but – so – but

W3 reminds students that 'and' and 'but' are not usually used at the beginning of a sentence, and teaches the corresponding adverbial linking words for these conjunctions.

Note that it is not normally correct to use 'because' at the start of a written sentence: for example, 'I opened the window. Because I was hot.' However, you may want to go into some examples showing students the informal usage of 'because' at the beginning of a sentence, e.g. if it is not separated from its clause: 'because I was hot, I opened the window' (which is a pattern they should also recognise with 'when') and contrasting this with 'because of that' which is similar to 'therefore' and 'so'.

W4 draws this point out further by highlighting that 'because of' and 'despite' are followed by a noun (which could be a gerund, a verb in the '-ing' form) whereas most linking words are followed by a full clause.

W5 reviews the work covered in different contexts.

W2

Choosing your Linking Word

- 1 How many linking words could you use to join these clauses together?

I need to study English _____ I work every day.

Notice that you can use different linking words in order to communicate a different meaning.

- 2 Now choose a linking word for the sentence below and write a paragraph which includes your sentence.

I walked home _____ I was tired.

- 3 When you have finished, use a different linking word and write another paragraph with the new sentence.

- 4 These sentences have been mixed up. Can you choose a linking word for each sentence and write it correctly?

I brother like football sports love doesn't my.

is never my brother sister talking very stops shy my.

he hit road was didn't him that bicycle the check the clear.

the one have police caught might partner a think he thief they.

flowers say bought some needed he to wife he sorry his for to her.

boys hard all the of studied them test unfortunately not passed the.

- 5 Now write a sentence of your own with a linking word. Then mix up the words and give it to your partner to make a correct sentence.