How to Link Ideas
By Clayton Cone

As writers, we must make our writing as clear as possible so that our readers pick up our messages accurately. Of course, writing requires that we put down ideas; naturally, many of these ideas go together in some way. We can make the reader's job easier if we show what the connections between the ideas are. If we use the wrong connector, however, the reader could pick up the wrong message. So using the correct connector could determine whether or not our work is effective. See the next number of pages for examples of the different types of connectors we have available and the differences between them.

Linkages
Conceptual/Organizational Pattern: Addition (like ideas, that normally go together)

Coordinator: and
• Jack caught the fish, and the cook fried it for dinner.
• Mary Ann loved her friends, and they missed her dearly when she went away to college.
• The car hit the guard rail, and the driver steered back onto the road.
• The pianist practiced for hours each day, and his music captivated audiences around the world.
• As Analisa told you, take your things and go, and don't come back.

Subordinators: none

Transitionals: also, further, in turn, furthermore, in addition, moreover
• Please check the oil and the radiator. Also, could you check the tires, please.
• Clarissa did all that; in addition, she topped off the brake fluid. Moreover, the shop owner had her add a cleaning solution to the windshield wiper reservoir.
• The principal bridges can take no more traffic during peak periods; furthermore, BART has maxed out train lengths and frequency.

Prepositions: among, with, beside
• With her hard work, she got straight A's.
• Out of Mary Ann's love for her friends, she sent them letters often after she went away to college.
• Among the many reasons the pianist captivated audiences around the world, he practiced his music for hours each day.
• Besides catching the fish, the fisherman cut it up for cooking.

**Conceptual/Organizational Pattern: Opposition (unlike ideas, that do not normally go together)**

Coordinator: but, yet
• The snake was poisonous, but she reached down and grabbed it behind the head anyway.
• Thompson said he's your friend, yet he refused to come to your wedding.
• Peggy sings clearly and fluently, but she stutters when she speaks.
• Tom can stay up all night reading novels, yet he falls asleep by 10 p.m. when he has to write an essay.

Subordinators: although, even though, even if, whereas, though
• Although the snake was poisonous, she reached down and grabbed it behind the head anyway.
• Thompson refused to come to your wedding even though he said he's your friend.
• Whereas Peggy stutters when she speaks, she sings clearly and fluently.
• Tom falls asleep by 10 p.m. when he has to write an essay, though he can stay up all night reading novels.

Transitionals: however, on the contrary, conversely, on the other hand
• The snake was poisonous. She reached down, however, and grabbed it by the back of the head anyway.
• On the one hand, Thompson says he's your friend; on the other hand, he refused to come to your wedding.
• You would think that Peggy would have difficulty singing because she stutters when she speaks. On the contrary, she sings with clarity and fluency.
• Tom has great difficulty staying awake when he has to write. Conversely, he's able to stay up all night when he chooses to read a novel.

Prepositions: against, beyond, despite, except, without, through, in spite of, notwithstanding
• Despite the snake being poisonous, she reached down and grabbed it behind the head anyway.
• In spite of Thompson's saying he's your friend, he refused to come to your wedding.
- Notwithstanding her stuttering when she speaks, Peggy sings with clarity and fluency.
- Despite Tom's great difficulty in staying awake when he has to write an essay, he's able to stay up all night when he chooses to read a novel.

**How to Link Ideas Conceptual/Organizational Pattern: Cause and Effect**

**Cause Coordinator: for**
- The bass went for the lure, for the lure resembled an injured minnow.
- Tiffany bought one purse each for her mother and two sisters, for the Nordstrom Rack had the bags on sale, three for $50.
- The dentist did a root canal, for the nerve in Mia's tooth had died.
- Ted donated his car to charity, for the engine needed major repairs.

**Subordinators: as, because, since, owing to**
- The bass went for the lure because the lure resembled an injured minnow.
- As the store had the purses on sale, Tiffany bought one each for her mother and two sisters.
- The dentist did a root canal since the nerve in Mia's tooth had died.
- As the engine needed major repairs, the car was donated to charity.

**Transitionals: logically, consequently, accordingly, as a result, then, thus, therefore, hence**
- The lure resembled an injured minnow. As a result, the bass went for it.
- The Nordstrom Rack had the bags on sale, three for $50.
- Consequently, Tiffany bought three, one each for her mother and two sisters.
- The nerve in Mia's tooth had died; the dentist; therefore, did a root canal.
- The engine needed major repairs. Hence, Ted donated the car to charity.

**Prepositions: by, for, upon, after, with**
- Upon seeing what looked like an injured minnow, the bass went for the lure.
- On a sale of three bags for $50, Tiffany bought one each for her mother and two sisters.
- With the nerve in her tooth dead, Mia got a root canal.
Effect
Coordinators: so (purposeful and accidental)
- The lights went out, so we had to read by candlelight.
- Tammy brought her lunch from home, so she saved herself $5/day.
- The rope Mitch was swinging on broke while he was over the embankment, so he fell a long way.
- General Electric offered Johanna just the job she wanted and even in her home town, so she took it.

Subordinators: so that, in order that (purposeful)
- Moffet turned the lights down so that we could see the projection on the screen.
- Tammy brought her lunch from home in order that she save $5/day.
- Mitch should have been swinging in the safety area so that he would not have had a long fall if the rope broke.
- Johanna worked hard at General Electric in order that she could land a choice job when she wanted it.

Transitionals: same as for "cause" above
- The lights went out; then we had to read by candlelight.
- Tammy brought her lunch from home; accordingly, she saved $5/day.
- The rope Mitch was swinging on broke while he was over the embankment. Thus, he fell a long way.
- General Electric offered Johanna just the job she wanted, even in her home town. Logically, she took it.

Prepositions: same as for "cause" above
- With the lights out, we had to read by candlelight.
- After bringing her lunch from home, Tammy saved $5/day.
- Upon the rope's breaking while he was swinging out over the embankment, Mitch fell a long way.
- On General Electric's offering her just the job she wanted and even in her home town, Johanna took it.

How to Link Ideas Conceptual/Organizational Pattern: Alternation

Coordinators: or, nor
- The fugitive went down into the creek or got picked up by a car Her tracks disappeared.
- Surprisingly, the temperature didn't drop, nor did the rains pick up with the changing of the season.
- Give me your keys or stop drinking.
- Either come to work on time or don't come at all.
Subordinators: none

Transitionals: alternately, on the other hand, otherwise
  • The fugitive could have gone into the creek. On the other hand, a driver could have picked her up.
  • Stop drinking; otherwise, don't drive.
  • Come to work on time. Alternately, don't come at all.

Prepositions: none

**How to Link Ideas Conceptual/Organizational Pattern:**
**Comparison/Contrast**

Coordinator: and
  • The early 1900s had the automobile, the telephone, and electricity, and the late 1900s have the microchip and the Internet.
  • San Francisco has the Golden Gate, and Seattle has Puget Sound.
  • The government ruled that Standard Oil Company had a monopoly in the early part of this century, and it has ruled that Microsoft has operated as a monopoly in the latter part.

Subordinators: as
  • As the early 1900's had the automobile, the telephone, and electricity, the late 1900s have the microchip and the Internet.
  • As San Francisco has the Golden Gate, Seattle has Puget Sound.
  • As the government ruled that Standard Oil Company had a monopoly in the early part of this century, it has ruled that Microsoft has operated as a monopoly in the latter part.

Transitionals: similarly, likewise
  • The early 1900's had significant technological advances in the automobile, the telephone, and electricity. Similarly, the late 1900's have had significant technological advances in the microchip and the Internet.
  • San Francisco has a famous strait in the Golden Gate. Likewise, Seattle has a famous strait in Puget Sound.
  • In the early part of this century, the government ruled that Standard Oil Company had a monopoly. Similarly, in the latter part of this century, it has ruled that Microsoft has operated as a monopoly.
Contrast

Coordinator: and
- The Nile is in Africa, and the Amazon in South America.
- Contra Costa College has a men's soccer program, and Diablo Valley College does not.
- Driving costs a lot (purchase price, insurance, and gas) but affords a lot of convenience, and riding the bus costs relatively little but has a more limited range in distance and time.

Subordinator: whereas
- Whereas the Nile is in Africa, the Amazon is in South America.
- Whereas Contra Costa College has a men's soccer program, Diablo Valley College does not.
- Whereas driving costs a lot (purchase price, insurance, and gas) but affords a lot of convenience, riding the bus costs relatively little but has a more limited range in distance and time.

Transitionals: on the other hand, conversely, alternately
- On the one hand, the Nile is in Africa. On the other hand, the Amazon is in South America.
- Contra Costa College has a men's soccer program. Conversely, Diablo Valley College does not.
- Driving costs a lot (purchase price, insurance, and gas) but affords a lot of convenience. Alternately, riding the bus costs relatively little but has a more limited range in distance and time.

How to Link Ideas Conceptual/Organizational Pattern: General to Specific (Illustration)

Coordinator: none

Subordinator: none

Transitional: such as, for example
- Some programs on campus virtually guarantee high-paid employment upon completion, such as the dental hygiene program, whose graduates earn $350/day.
How to Link Ideas Conceptual/Organizational Pattern: Part to Whole

Coordinator: none

Subordinator: none

Transitionals: part of
  • Although far from the stomach, the teeth are part of the digestive system that breaks food down for the body to extract nutrients.

How to Link Ideas Conceptual/Organizational Pattern: Analogy

Coordinator: none

Subordinators: as if, as though ( contrary to fact)
  • Clifford ran as though he were a youth again.
  • The Greeks said, "The nectar tasted as if prepared by the gods. "

Transitionals: in this way
  • Clifford ran with swiftness and balance. In this way, he was a youth again.

Conceptual/Organizational Pattern: Process or Chronology

Coordinator: none

Subordinators: after, before, as soon as, when, while, until, during, throughout
  • The grounds crew mows the golf course before they water, not after.
  • The skin temperature begins to cool when perspiration forms and evaporation takes place.
  • The alarm goes off as soon as a door is forced open.
  • Continue chest compressions until a paramedic arrives.

Transitionals: then, next, first, previously, finally, afterwards, subsequently, secondly
  • The grounds crew mows the course first. Afterwards they water it.
  • Perspiration forms on the surface of the hot skin. Then evaporation takes place. Finally, the skin cools off.
  • The thief pried open the door. Then the alarm went off.
  • The Good Samaritan started chest compressions immediately. The paramedics arrived subsequently.
Prepositions: after, before, since, until
- The grounds crew mowed the course before watering.
- Cooling comes at the evaporation.
- The thief pried open the door until detection.

**How to Link Ideas Conceptual/Organizational Pattern: Conditions**

Coordinator: none

Subordinators: if, unless, provided that, as long as
- The manager will give you a free game if you can hit the ball into the hole beneath the screen.
- Don't wear your shoes on the carpet unless your feet are clean.
- Come to the concert provided that you have tickets.
- Join the team as long as you have time for practice and the games.

Transitionals: otherwise, or else
- Hit the ball in the hole beneath the screen. Otherwise, you lose.
- Take your shoes off. Or else you'll muddy the carpet.
- Bring tickets. Otherwise, you can't get in.
- Make time for practice and the games. Otherwise, don't go out.

**How to Link Ideas Conceptual/Organizational Patterns: Concession (acknowledges a negative truth, but rises above it)**

Coordinators: but, yet
- The IRS may take half my lottery winnings, but I'll end up with over $1 million.
- Francine had to endure many put-downs from her subordinates, yet in the end she had control over their lives, not they hers.
- The punk scratched Larry's Lexus from bumper to bumper, but Larry took the kid's parents to court and got damages and legal fees.

Subordinators: though, although, even if, even though
- Even though the IRS may take half my lottery winnings, I'll end up with over $1 million.
- Although Francine had to endure many put-downs from her subordinates, in the end she had control over their lives, not they hers.
- Even if Loretta lost her job and her home, she would still be optimistic.
Transitionals: still, nevertheless. at the same time
- The IRS may take half my lottery winnings. Still, I'll end up with over $1 million.
- Francine had to tolerate many put-downs from her subordinates. Nevertheless, in the end she had control over their lives, not they hers.
- Loretta could lose her job and her home. At the same time, she would be as optimistic as ever.

Prepositions: despite. in spite of
- Despite the IRS's possibly taking half my lottery winnings, I'll end up with over a $1 million.
- In spite of Francine's having to tolerate put-downs from her subordinates, in the end she had control over their lives, not they hers.
- Despite the punk's scratching his Lexus, Larry took the kid's parents to court and got damages plus legal fees.

**How to Link Ideas Conceptual/Organizational Pattern: Emphasis**

Coordinator: none (generally, though "and" may be used at times)
- The triathlete ran and cycled, and swam and swam to prepare for his competition.

Subordinators: none

Transitionals: above all, certainly, most important, indeed, surely, for one thing
- Indeed, the college student sleeps little.
- Above all, arrive at the test center early, because the monitors close and lock the doors after 8:30 a.m. You certainly don't expect me to pay, do you?

**How to Link Ideas Conceptual/ Organizational Pattern: Summary**

Coordinator: none (generally, though "so" may be used at times)
- So here we are, and all our options have run out.

Subordinator: none

Transitionals: in conclusion, in summary, to sum up, finally, at last, in closing
In summary, points one through five make up my thesis. To sum up, I came out west for a change in weather, to rejoin my family, and to start in on a new career.