

Discourse markers for advanced English

GRAMMAR

LEVEL
Intermediate

NUMBER
EN_BE_3417G

LANGUAGE
English






Goals

- Can identify and explain the usage of some more advanced discourse markers.
- Can use discourse markers to organise my speech and writing appropriately.





To begin with, it is great to see you in class today. What are some of our goals when mastering a language?

Above all, we want to express ourselves clearly and link our ideas together in a sophisticated manner.

Anyway, let's get started and learn how we can more **easily manage** a conversation with **discourse markers**.



Preview

In this lesson, you are going to learn how to use **discourse markers for advanced business English**.



Well, thank you all very much for being here.



Warm up

Talk to the teacher about your day.
Try to use the following discourse markers in your response.

Well, I woke up early and then went for a run. **Mind you**, I was so tired, I didn't really want to go. **On top of that**, I didn't sleep well...

well

to sum up

on top of that

mind you



Discourse markers

- Discourse markers are words and phrases which are used to **connect and organise ideas**
- They help us to develop more **complex ideas** and **sustained arguments** or **signal to the listener what might come next.**

Discourse markers help us with:

- comparing
- contrasting/opposing
- organising a speech and being used as formal markers in this genre





Discourse markers

In addition, **discourse markers** will assist you in **being more fluent**, and help you understand conversations with greater ease.

You can think of them as **signposts** that help to **structure** what you say or guide the listener and reader through the content.





Comparing

- We can use **discourse markers** to **highlight the similarities** between two things. We call this showing **comparison**.
- Observe the example below



Sales in France have soared over the past few months. **Similarly**, sales in Germany are increasing at a very high rate.



Discourse markers for comparing

similarly

The marketing team has had a very successful month. **Similarly**, the business development department have made some very good progress on their project.

likewise

Profits have risen steadily this year. **Likewise**, market share has improved considerably.

correspondingly

Our newest product has been very successful and our revenue is **correspondingly** growing.

In the same way

To be successful in business you need to be organised. **In the same way**, you should always keep detailed records to know exactly what your financial situation is like.



Discourse markers for contrasting/opposing

- We can also use **discourse markers** to **link an idea** with **another** which is unexpected, or show the differences between two things. This shows a **contrast**.
- They can also be used to oppose a previous statement and make a counter argument.
- Discourse markers of this sort are generally placed at the **beginning of the sentence**.
- These **discourse markers** are effective to use in debates or speeches when giving an opinion or making a point.

- **Despite** all our market research, sales have been falling.
- **Although** it's very hard work, I love my job.





Vocabulary to contrast/oppose

however

We took a risk with this project. **However**, this backfired and sales are suffering as a result.

conversely

She might have quit her job because she didn't like her colleagues, or, **conversely**, because she found a better job elsewhere.

in contrast

Sales have been steadily rising this month, **in contrast** to last month when they were plummeting.

on the contrary

Sales have increased significantly in Germany. **On the contrary**, they fell slightly in Ukraine.

although

Although this is a serious problem for our company, our competitors will likely be facing the same problem.

despite

I like my job **despite** the long working hours.



Categorise

Match the discourse markers with their role in a sentence

similarly

in contrast

on the contrary

likewise

as opposed to that

although

in the same way

correspondingly

comparing

contrasting/opposing



Rewrite the sentences

Use discourse markers to rewrite the sentences below, showing comparison or contrast.

1. Janie can sing beautifully. Joshua can play the piano well.
2. The weather is great today. Tomorrow will be rainy.
3. I love maths. I don't like writing.
4. Online sales have boomed. Retail sales have decreased.
5. Apples are healthy. Oranges have health benefits too.



Fill the gaps using discourse markers

1. Your presentation was truly fascinating!
_____ I really enjoyed reading
your paper on the importance of ICT
integration as a business strategy.



Your presentation was truly
fascinating! Similarly, I really enjoyed
your paper on the importance of ICT
integration as a business strategy.

2. My group is expected to grow
considerably in the next weeks.
_____, you can expect your
group to double in size.



3. My experience has made me a strong
team player. _____ I understand
how to motivate my colleagues.



4. _____ the very difficult business
environment we are operating under, it's
highly likely we will still meet our targets.



5. _____ that's a very good idea,
the cost is simply too high.





Compare and contrast

Use discourse markers to compare and contrast the following:



Working in-house



Working remotely



On-site customer care services



Outsourced customer care services



**Oppose each of the statements with a counter argument.
Use discourse markers in your response.**

Dating within a
company
shouldn't be
allowed.

We need
minimum wage.

Micromanagement
will improve
employee
performance.

You should always
include a photo on
your CV.

Global warming is
a myth.

Technology is
dehumanising us.

Organising a speech or a presentation

- **Discourse markers** are also very useful when **writing** or **organising a speech** or **presentation**.
- They can help us to **order ideas** and **sequence arguments**.
- They give a sense of **formality**.

The next few slides show how discourse markers can be used **to introduce specific sections**, to facilitate structuring your writing or speech.



Discourse markers of introduction

Firstly

First and foremost

For a start

To begin with

First of all

These can be used to introduce an idea, paragraph or section in a speech or piece of writing.

- **Firstly**, I would like to welcome the keynote speaker to the room.
- **First and foremost**, our priority is the company's bottom line.



Discourse markers for the body

Secondly

Thirdly

**On top of
that**

What's more

Next

These discourse markers are used to introduce additional ideas within a paragraph or section of your writing or speech.

- Firstly, we are going to cover discourse markers for comparisons...
secondly, we will look at discourse markers for contrasting...
Thirdly...



Discourse markers to summarise or conclude

To
conclude/In
conclusion

To sum up

In summary

Finally

Lastly

These discourse markers can be used to signal the conclusion or summary of an idea or section of the text.

- **Finally,** I'd like to thank everyone in my team, who have been working so hard on this project.



Discourse markers for signalling additional information

- **Discourse markers** can also be used to signal **additional information** in a more **formal way**. The following examples can **add information** in a way that shows the second statement follows logically from the first.
- **Thus, hence** and **therefore** are usually **separated** from the rest of the sentence by commas, or are used to begin a **new independent** clause or sentence.

- He is happy with the project. **Thus**, we can expect further work from this client.
- It's rush hour; **hence** the amount of traffic.
- Our competitor is taking more and more market share away from us. **Therefore**, we can expect our revenue to suffer slightly.





Notes on usage

Be aware that using too many **discourse markers** can result in writing which sounds clunky and artificial. Try to only use them **when necessary**.

Beyond the uses studied in this lesson, **discourse markers** can also be used in the following ways:

- to begin a conversation or initiate communication
- to mark a change or shift in topic
- to begin a response or reply
- to serve as filler
- as a way of delaying



Discourse markers for signalling additional information

Complete these sentences with your own ideas, using thus, hence and therefore

1. I've been late for work every day this week...
2. This project has been a complete failure...
3. The sales director is very pleased with our work...
4. We are having a few problems with our clients in France...
5. The CEO has unexpectedly resigned...



Write paragraphs

Write a paragraph using the discourse markers provided as part of a greater speech.

Use the images as stimulus.



To begin with...



For a start...



In conclusion...



To sum up...



Discuss the sentence

Identify the discourse markers in the following sentences. Some of them have not been covered in the lesson, but try to make an educated guess!

1. To tell you the truth, I felt the same way as Dave in the meeting.
2. Although the evidence is concerning, there is not enough data to make a concrete opinion.
3. So, I think we need to discuss our new marketing strategy.
4. Changes will need to occur for this to become more democratic. For a start, we must all contribute to the creative direction of the group.
5. Our competitors are moving to flood the industry with a cheaper product. Likewise, we must do the same.



Plan a speech

Organise a speech on one of the following topics. Include the discourse markers you have learnt in this lesson to help structure your speech.

The importance of funding space travel and research.

The possibilities of solar energy.

Future advances in medicine.

To begin with/For a start...

Similarly/Likewise
/In the same way

In conclusion/In summary/To sum up



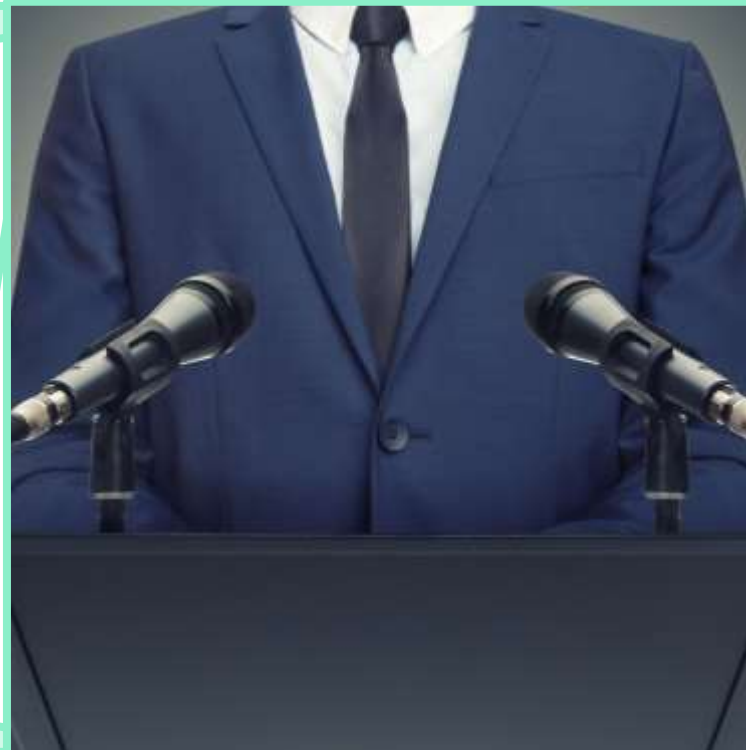
Present your speech

Present your speech to the teacher.

Use the discourse markers you have learnt in the lesson to further your argument

Your teacher may choose to make some opposing comments.

Try to counter them with some of the phrases below.



On the other hand...

Nonetheless...

Others might argue...

On the contrary...



Reflect on the goals

Go back to the second slide of the lesson and check if you have achieved all the goals of the lesson.

yes

no





Reflect on this lesson

Think about everything you have seen in this lesson.
What were the most difficult activities or words? The easiest?



If you have time, go over
the most difficult slides again



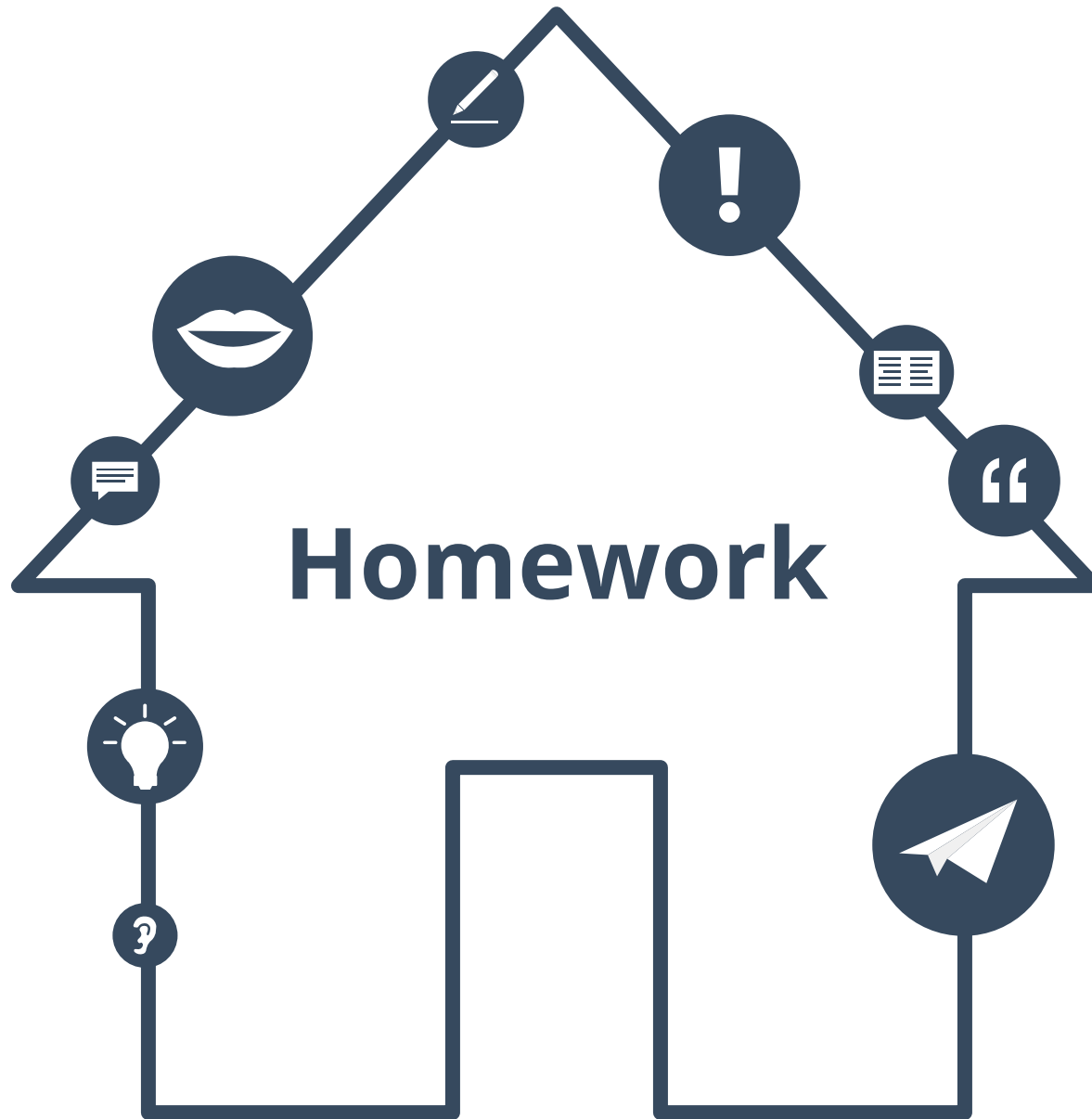
Answer key

Slide 12

Comparing: similarly, likewise, in the same way, correspondingly
Contrasting: in contrast, on the contrary, as opposed to that, although

Slide 14

2. Likewise, similarly, in the same way
3. Correspondingly, likewise, similarly
4. Despite
5. Although





List discourse markers

Go through the lesson and list the discourse markers you have learned in this lesson by category.

To compare

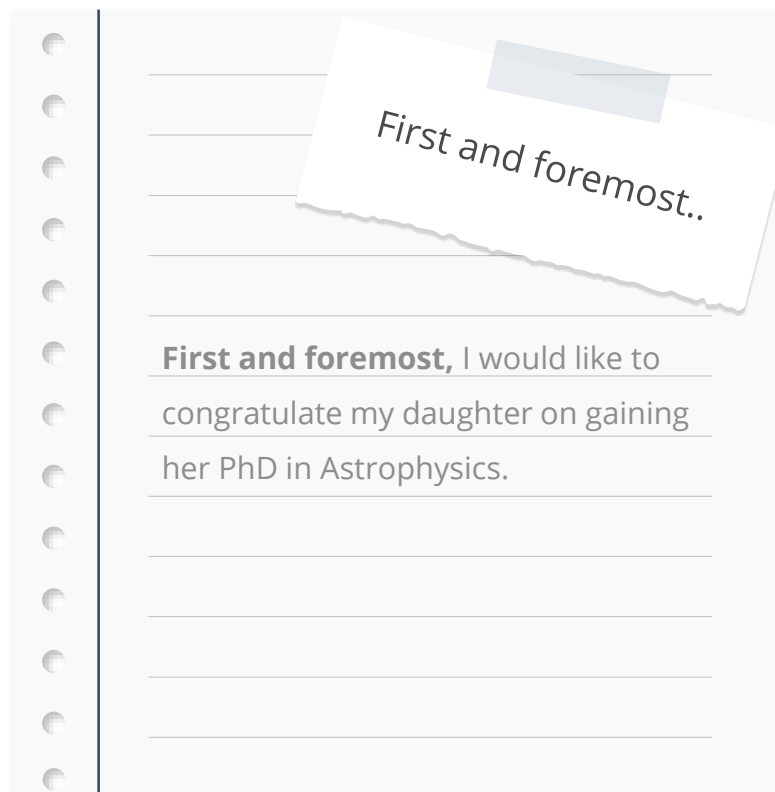
To oppose

To formally organise
speech



Practise

Practise using your favourite discourse markers from the lesson. Don't only write them, but also read aloud and practise the pronunciation.





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