



Literacy focus 5:

**Discourse
markers**



What are Discourse Markers?

Discourse markers are often called ‘linking words’ or ‘linking phrases’. They are used in writing to ‘signpost’ where your argument is going. Discourse markers show turns, join ideas together, show attitude, and generally control the communication.

Why are they effective?

Discourse markers are an important feature of formal language. The skilful use of these ‘signposts’ in your writing indicate a higher level of fluency and an ability to produce an authentic academic voice. They make your writing clearer because they help to give it a logical structure.

How many of these do you use in your writing?

Type of relationship	Sentence connectors
Adding something	Moreover; in addition; additionally; further to; furthermore; also; besides; what is more
Making a contrast between two things/ideas	However; On the other hand; Yet; Nevertheless; Whereas; On the contrary
Making an unexpected contrast	Although; Even though; Despite the fact that; Regardless of the fact that
Saying why something is the case	Because; Since; As; In so far as
Saying what the result of something is	Therefore; Consequently; As a result of; Accordingly; Hence; Thus; For this reason; Because of this
Expressing a condition	If; In the event of; As long as; So long as; Provided that; Assuming that; Given that...
Making what you say stronger	As a matter of fact; In fact; Indeed..

More discourse markers

For generalising..

On the whole; In general; In many/most/all cases; Broadly speaking; To a great extent; To some extent

Giving examples..

For instance; for example; in particular

Logical consequence...

Therefore; As a result of; Consequently; So; Then

Structuring...

Firstly; Secondly; Lastly; Finally; To begin with; For one thing; For another thing

Summing up...

In conclusion; To sum up; Briefly; In short

Complete the following sentences using an appropriate discourse marker.

1. nurses are overworked and underpaid.

- a) In particular
- b) Broadly speaking
- c) For instance
- d) Except for

Answer: b) Broadly speaking



2. I don't believe in ghosts. I haven't seen one yet.

- a) I think
- b) At least
- c) In other words
- d) That is to say

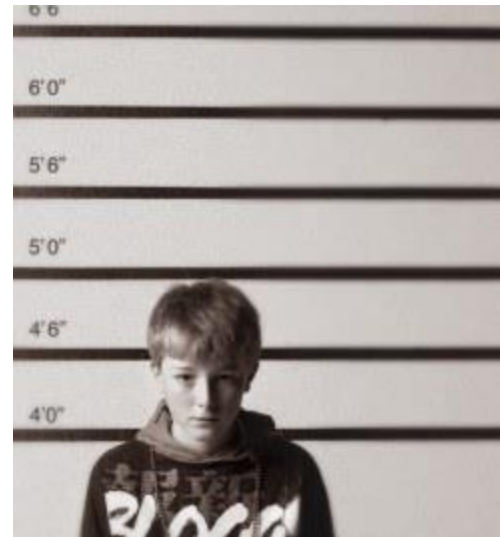


Answer: d) That is to say

3. I think he should be acquitted. he is too young to know the difference between right and wrong.

- a) After all
- b) Well
- c) Honestly
- d) I suppose

Answer: After all



4. The man was sleeping soundly on the river bank. a crocodile was creeping closer.

- a) Despite this
- b) As a result
- c) Meanwhile
- d) By contrast



Answer: c) Meanwhile

5. The gas leaked from the burst pipe., there was an huge explosion.

- a) Despite this
- b) As a result
- c) In this case
- d) In spite of this

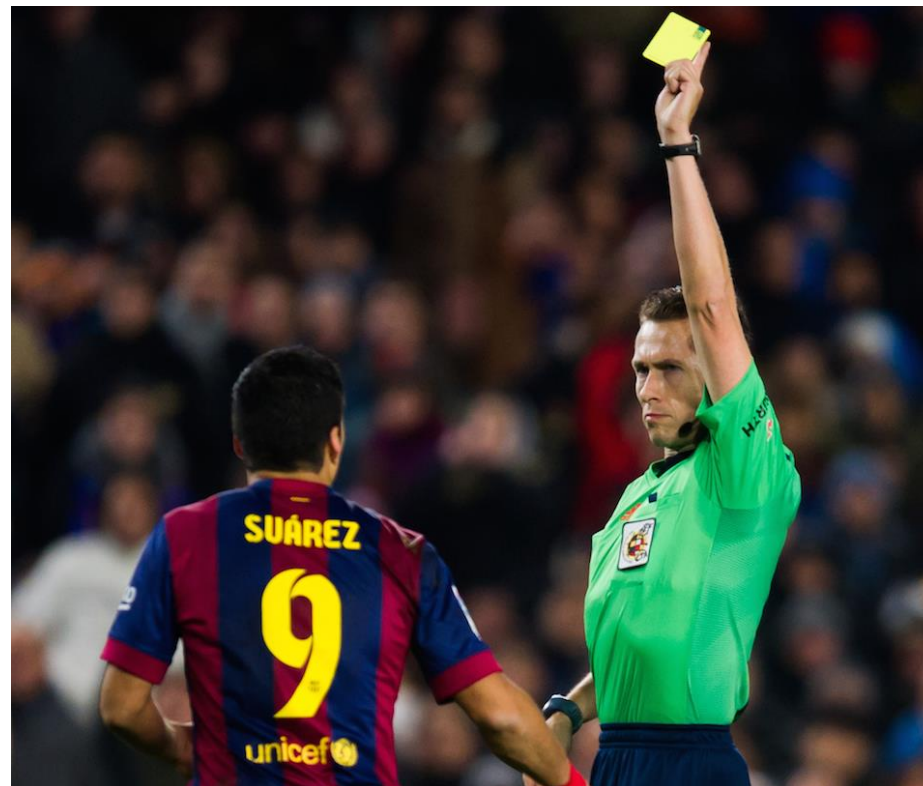
Answer: b) As a result



6. He has been warned before., he should have listened.

- a) In this case
- b) Instead
- c) Despite this

Answer: a) In this case



1. I had a terrible day at work and lost my umbrella too.
_____ I spoke to that nice guy who works in the
coffee shop at last!

Moreover

on the other hand

At least

however

Besides

firstly

Whereas

then

Actually

though

2. Television turns people into lazy couch potatoes. _____, there are some educational programmes on.

Moreover

On the other hand

At least

however

Besides

firstly

Whereas

then

Actually

though

3. _____, I would like to welcome you all to the conference today.

Moreover

on the other hand

At least

however

Besides

firstly

Whereas

then

Actually

though

4. _____ the film was a little boring, we still had a nice evening out.

Moreover

on the other hand

At least

however

Besides

firstly

Whereas

then

Actually

though

5. I've always known Caroline as a mean person. _____, she lent me £10 yesterday without me having to ask twice!

Moreover

on the other hand

At least

however

Besides

firstly

Whereas

then

Actually

though

6. I got up at 9 o'clock yesterday and had a cold shower. _____, I had breakfast and left for work.

Moreover

on the other hand

At least

however

Besides

firstly

Whereas

then

Actually

though

7. My brother works in a large office.
_____ I work on my own at home.

Moreover

on the other hand

At least

however

Besides

firstly

Whereas

then

Actually

though

8. Why do you think I don't want to go out tonight. _____, I would be delighted to get out of the house.

Moreover

on the other hand

At least

however

Besides

firstly

Whereas

then

Actually

though

9. You should go to university as it gives you a chance to meet so many new people.

_____, it gives you the chance to get important qualifications and get a better job.

Moreover

on the other hand

At least

however

Besides

firstly

Whereas

then

Actually

though

10. I don't want to go to the football game. Football bores me and I don't want to pay £40 for a ticket.

_____, look at the weather! All that rain!

Moreover

on the other hand

At least

however

Besides

firstly

Whereas

then

Actually

though

Answers

- ▶ Question 1 - At least.
- ▶ Question 2 - On the other hand.
- ▶ Question 3 - Firstly.
- ▶ Question 4 - Though.
- ▶ Question 5 - However.
- ▶ Question 6 - Then.
- ▶ Question 7 - whereas.
- ▶ Question 8 - Actually.
- ▶ Question 9 - Moreover.
- ▶ Question 10 - Besides.

Challenge 1

What's being said?

- ▶ Write a list of 10 discourse markers
- ▶ Use these to write a dialogue between the characters in this picture.



Challenge 2

Follow the news?

- ▶ Write a list of 10 discourse markers
- ▶ Use these to write about why you think Brexit should or should not happen.



Give your completed challenges to your form tutor

The best 10 pieces of writing (including at least 10 'discourse markers') will win a prize!

