Conjunctions

A picture guide for Year 5. Start with what a conjunction does, then meet the two teams.

A conjunction is a joining word.

It joins words, phrases or whole ideas (clauses) together - like the glue between building blocks.

How it joins

I was hungry, **so** I ate an apple.

We can play football **or** we can go swimming.

Mum smiled **because** she had won the raffle.

Blue blocks = clauses (a group of words with a verb). Orange = the conjunction that joins them.

There are two teams of conjunctions

⚖ Coordinating

Join two ideas that are **equally important**. Each side could be a sentence on its own.

for **and** **nor** **but** **or** **yet** **so**

Remember them as **FANBOYS**.

🔗 Subordinating

Start an **extra** idea that **cannot stand on its own** - it hangs on to the main idea.

because **although** **when** **if** **while** **until** **unless**

Remember them as **I SAW A WABUB** - see page 3.

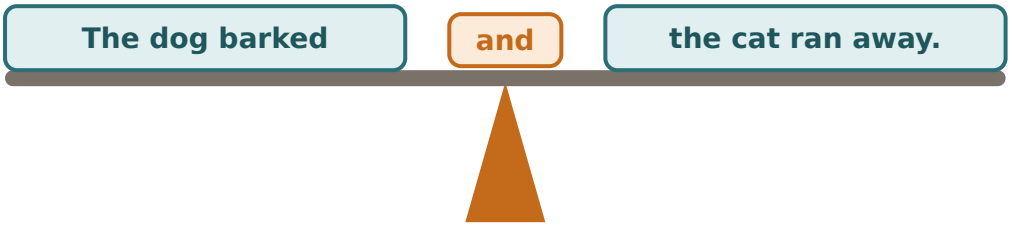
For parents: you might remember these as "connectives" or "joining words". Schools now use "conjunction", and split them into the two teams above.

Conjunctions: FANBOYS

The seven coordinating conjunctions spell FANBOYS. "And", "but", "or" and "so" are the ones children use most.

F	**for**	gives a reason (old-fashioned)	She went to bed, **for** she was tired.
A	**and**	adds more	I like apples **and** pears.
N	**nor**	adds another "not"	He doesn't like peas, **nor** does he like carrots.
B	**but**	shows a difference	It was sunny **but** cold.
O	**or**	gives a choice	Do you want juice **or** water?
Y	**yet**	a surprising difference	He was tired, **yet** he kept running.
S	**so**	shows what happened next (result)	It rained, **so** we stayed in.

Both sides balance



With a coordinating conjunction, **each side makes sense on its own**: "The dog barked." / "The cat ran away."

Comma tip: when "but", "so" or "yet" join two longer clauses, a comma often goes before them: *It was late, so we went home.* With short lists using "and" or "or", no comma is needed.

Conjunctions: subordinating

Subordinating conjunctions add extra information - when, why, what if, or a contrast. They are the ones Year 5 writing is marked on most.

I SAW A WABUB

I	S	A	W	A	W	A	B	U	B
if	since	as	when	although	while	after	before	until	because

Plus: unless, though, even though, whereas, once.

What job does it do?

⏰ Time - when?

when, while, after, before, until, since, as, once

We ate popcorn **while** we watched the film.

❓ Reason - why?

because, since, as

I wore a coat **because** it was cold.

🚦 Condition - what if?

if, unless

You can play out **if** you finish your homework.

⇄ Contrast - but...

although, though, even though, whereas

She smiled **although** she was nervous.

Main clause + subordinate clause

The main clause makes sense on its own. The subordinate clause (starting with the conjunction) does not.

We played outside | **although** | **it was raining.**

⇅ swap them round

Although | **it was raining,** | **we played outside.**

The comma rule: if the sentence **starts** with the subordinating conjunction, put a comma where the subordinate clause ends. *When the bell rang, we lined up.*

Conjunctions: try it

Change the conjunction, change the meaning

I'll come to the park **if** it's sunny.	only when it's sunny
I'll come to the park **unless** it's sunny.	not when it's sunny
I'll come to the park **because** it's sunny.	the sun is the reason
I'll come to the park **although** it's sunny.	a surprise - you might expect the opposite
I'll come to the park **when** it's sunny.	at the time it's sunny

Conjunction or preposition?

Conjunction

I left **before** the bell rang.

A whole clause (with a verb) comes after it.

Preposition

I left **before** lunch.

Just a noun comes after it.

Your turn: circle the conjunction

1. I wanted to play out, but it was raining.
2. We waited until the bus arrived.
3. If you are hungry, have a banana.
4. She laughed although the joke was terrible.
5. Do you want to paint or draw?

For parents: a great way to practise is "sentence stretching": say a short sentence ("The dog barked.") and take turns adding a conjunction and a new idea ("...because the postman was at the door").

Answers: 1. but 2. until 3. if 4. although 5. or