

Grade 4 Playlist: Commas and Coordinating Conjunctions

Aligns with *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.4.2.C*:

- Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.

Welcome

Sometimes writers need to describe two related actions, thoughts, or events. They can do this in two ways. The first way is to write two separate sentences.

Mary likes eating peaches. Mary also likes eating pears.

This is grammatically correct, but it is not the most interesting way to write. Most of the time, it makes sense to combine both of the events into one longer sentence. To do this, the writer needs to use a comma and a special word called a coordinating conjunction.

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- place a comma and a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.
- use the correct coordinating conjunction when writing a compound sentence.

Review

Key Terms

- A **simple sentence** has a subject and a verb. It tells one complete thought.
- A **compound sentence** is a single sentence that contains two complete thoughts, or two simple sentences that are joined together.
- A **coordinating conjunction** is a word that is used to join phrases and clauses. The words *for*, *and*, *nor*, *but*, *or*, *yet*, and *so* are coordinating conjunctions.

Practice!

Use this quiz to review the difference between simple and compound sentences:

- <https://www.ixl.com/ela/grade-3/is-the-sentence-simple-or-compound>



Exploring the Standard

A Closer Look: Coordinating Conjunctions

Compound sentences use coordinating conjunctions to connect ideas. The most popular way to remember coordinating conjunctions is with the word “FANBOYS.” Each letter in “FANBOYS” stands for a common coordinating conjunction. Take a look:

F → for

A → and

N → nor

B → but

O → or

Y → yet

S → so

It is important to choose the correct coordinating conjunction to use. Each of the seven “FANBOYS” means something different. To choose the correct conjunction, look at the two simple sentences that are being combined into one. If they show a contrast or choice, it might be best to use *but* or *or*. If they show a result, it might be best to use *so*. If they show additional information, it might be best to use *and*. Look closely at what the compound sentence is trying to say before choosing the right coordinating conjunction.

Let’s take a look at the example given at the beginning of this lesson:

Mary likes eating peaches. Mary also likes eating pears.

Which coordinating conjunction could be used correctly to join these two simple sentences? Mary enjoys eating two kinds of fruit. The best coordinating conjunction would be “*and*” because it would show that the second sentence adds similar information to the first sentence. Here is how the above sentences can be combined:

Step One: Change the period to a comma.

Mary likes eating peaches, Mary also likes eating pears.

Step Two: Add the correct FANBOY. (In this sentence it would be “*and*.”)

Mary likes eating peaches, and Mary also likes eating pears.

Step Three: Take out the second “*Mary*” and replace it with the word “*she*.”

Mary likes eating peaches, and she also likes eating pears.

Now the compound sentence is complete.



Teaching Notes: Commas and Coordinating Conjunctions

The goal of L.4.2.C is for students to form compound sentences correctly. Students should recognize which **coordinating conjunction** to place in a **compound sentence**. Additionally, students should use a comma consistently before the coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence. The following information contains ideas that teachers can incorporate into their classrooms as well as additional resources to peruse and integrate into instruction as appropriate.

Activities

1. For a classroom or small group activity, give a general topic like “playing basketball” or “making a sandwich.” Then, have students write three simple sentences each that go along with the topic given on construction paper. Students should cut out each sentence. Then, hand out small papers with a comma and a coordinating conjunction on them, and have students work together to combine the papers into compound sentences. Keep repeating this exercise until all of the sentences have been used.
2. Have a classroom discussion about when to use each of the FANBOYS coordinating conjunctions. When is it a good idea to use the word “yet”? (When contrast occurs, or when something happens despite something else.) What does it mean when we use the word “or”? (A choice must be involved.)

Writing Prompts

1. Have students write a compound sentence for each coordinating conjunction. Make sure that they are combining two simple sentences, using a comma before each coordinating conjunction, and choosing the correct coordinating conjunction for each sentence they write.
2. For partner work, have students make 10 of their own compound sentences. Have them leave a blank space where the coordinating conjunction and comma would go. Then, have students switch papers with a neighbor and let the other student try to fill in the blank with the correct coordinating conjunction and a comma. Finally, have students return the paper to the original writer in order to check it.

Additional Resources

Consider these additional resources when teaching L.4.2.C:

Compound Sentences by Mary Blow: For teachers with access to a SMART Board, the following resource gives several instructional ideas. Even without a SMART Board, the worksheets can still be used for additional practice.

- http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/classroom_solutions/2011/02/compound-sentences

Conjunctions Song: A fun music video about conjunctions can be found at the link below. The first 1:30 of the video focuses on FANBOYS. This would be a good review or introduction if time allows.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2ug9xr0las>

