5 Punctuation: commas with discourse markers

1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

1 a In conclusion, the world population is expanding at an unsustainable rate.
  b In conclusion the world population is expanding at an unsustainable rate.
2 a If we look for example, at sport in schools.
  b If we look, for example, at sport in schools.

Discourse markers are words or phrases which show how ideas in a text link together. They are often separated from the rest of the text by commas.

We usually use a comma after a phrase or an adverb which introduces a sentence:
In addition, *many disabled people suffer discrimination at work.*
On the other hand, *the unemployment rate has fallen.*
Finally, *local councils need to consider the cost of recycling schemes.*
Unfortunately, *there were no more tickets available.*
Similarly, *animals kept outdoors are also vulnerable to infection.*

We also use commas around certain words and phrases in the middle of a sentence:
This problem can't, ***however,*** *be solved quite so simply.*
There are more jobs in the city, but, ***of course,*** *the cost of living is higher.*
Which option you choose depends, ***to a certain extent,*** *on your budget.*
Water is particularly scarce in arid regions, ***for example/for instance,*** *in Africa.*
People who live in cold countries, ***such as/like*** *Norway, have to spend more on heating.*

☆ Where an adverb describes an adjective, commas are not needed:
This was matched by a ***similarly dramatic*** *increase in May.*
However careful *you are, accidents can always happen.*

2 Correct the mistake below.

Inevitably there's always something you forget.



..... something you forget.

3 Add commas in the sentences below where needed.

1 What happens if for example you forget your password?
2 To sum up I'd like to recap the main advantages and disadvantages.
3 Statistics can however be misleading.
4 Low-lying countries such as Bangladesh are particularly at risk.
5 Furthermore not everyone will be able to afford to install new telephones.
6 Contact sports like rugby will inevitably involve more injuries.
7 A similarly priced house in the city centre would only have one bedroom.
8 We will of course reimburse any travel expenses.

LIVEWORKSHEETS