

Exercise 10

Read the information. Then choose the correct words or phrases to complete the text.

Using time markers

First, firstly, at first, etc.

- We use *firstly / secondly / thirdly / finally*, etc. to put a series of events in order: e.g. *There are three things you need to do. Firstly, you need to do X. Secondly, you need to do Y. Finally, you need to do Z.*
- We can use *first* (or *first of all*) instead of *firstly*: e.g. *First (of all), you need to do X.*
- We use *at first* to describe what was true at the beginning, before it changed later: e.g. *At first, there were only a few people. But more and more people arrived during the day.*
- We can use *first* between the subject and verb to describe the beginning of a process or the first time something happened: e.g. *I first met her when we were students, but we've met many times since then.*

At the end / in the end

- We use *at the end* to describe the last part of an event: e.g. *At the end (of the party), everyone went home.*
- We use *in the end* to describe the final (and perhaps unexpected) results: e.g. *We were really worried about his illness, but in the end he made a full recovery.*

While, during, meanwhile

- After *while*, we need a clause (subject + verb): e.g. *While we were at the meeting, I checked my emails.*
- It's also possible to have an *-ing* clause after *while*: e.g. *While waiting, I checked my emails (= While I was waiting ...).*
- After *during*, we need a noun phrase: e.g. *During the meeting, I checked my emails.*
- We usually use *meanwhile* to connect two separate sentences: e.g. *He gave a really boring presentation at the meeting. Meanwhile, I checked my emails.*

When the robbery of a local museum was first/firstly/while reported, nobody paid it much attention. At first/First/Secondly, it was thought that nothing valuable was missing. However, it was later discovered that some valuable coins were missing.

During/ Meanwhile/While a recent press conference, an expert was asked what the thieves might do with the coins. She suggested three possibilities: At first/First/ In the end, the thieves might try to sell the coins to a collector. This was considered to be rather unlikely, as it would be easy to find the coins. Meanwhile/Second/Secondly, they might melt the coins and sell the gold from them. This was also thought to be unlikely, as the gold would be worth a lot less than the coins themselves. At the end/ Finally/Last, the coins might be sent abroad for sale in another country. This was seen as the most likely case.

During/ Meanwhile/While, the police have released a statement, announcing that they have a good idea who the thieves are. 'We are confident that we will catch them at the end/ finally/ in the end, even if it takes months, and we will return the coins to the museum.' the statement said.