

Essay Cohesion, Coherence and Unity

Cohesion is the way that ideas, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs are linked together in a text. If an essay does not have a sufficient number of these links or connections, it lacks cohesion.

Coherence is the level of clarity in the message of a text. In other words, writing should have a smooth and logical flow that makes it easy to read.

In academic writing, one way to develop good coherence is to avoid using too many simple sentences. Therefore, writers should aim to include sufficient multi-clause sentences in their essays. To make multi-clause sentences, use coordinating conjunctions. The acronym FANBOYS is a good way to remember these conjunctions: For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So.

It is also important to use transitions to make links between sentences. This helps strengthen both cohesion and coherence.

A. Categorise the coordinating conjunctions mentioned above according to their function. Two functions have more than one conjunction.

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|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Contrast | 2. Effect | 3. Addition |
| 4. Cause | 5. Choice | |

B. Complete the compound sentences with the correct coordinating conjunction.

- The dangers of smoking are well publicised, ... people continue to do it.
- The cost of labour in China is increasing, ... it is losing one of its competitive advantages.

C. Put the transitions below into the table according to their function.

Due to Additionally However Therefore Indeed In fact Firstly In conclusion
 Furthermore Finally Despite Nonetheless For instance In summary Because of
 First of all To sum up To conclude Hence Similarly To illustrate Likewise Thus

Addition	
Cause	
Effect	
Contrast	
Comparison	
Example	
Emphasis	
Order / Sequence	
Conclusion / Summary	

D. Add transitions to complete the passage below.

(1), the main reason why Ferrari is such a successful company is because their cars have become the ultimate status symbol. (2), a 1962 Ferrari 250 GTO sold for \$49 million at auction.

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Another way to achieve strong coherence in writing is by avoiding repetition. This can be done by referring back to a previously mentioned noun. Pronouns are a commonly used cohesive device for this purpose.

Compare the two sentence pairs below. The second pair shows better coherence as it avoids repetition of the main subject, the United Nations. The pronoun 'it' is used, in this case, as a substitution or reference.

1. The United Nations is perhaps the most famous intergovernmental organisation. The United Nations was founded in 1945...

2. The United Nations is perhaps the most famous intergovernmental organisation. It was founded in 1945...

E. Rewrite the paragraph below by replacing nouns in the paragraph with reference words from the table.

Types of reference words	Examples
Pronouns	he / she / it / they
Possessive pronouns	his / her / theirs
Objective pronouns	her / him / them
Demonstrative pronouns	this / that / these / those

The gaming industry is now the most lucrative media sector by far. The gaming industry generates more than double the revenue of both movies and popular music combined. The gaming industry's success can, in part, be credited to the Sony PlayStation. The Sony PlayStation revolutionised the gaming industry after the Sony PlayStation was released in 1994. The PlayStation became the first gaming console to sell 100 million units. The main reason why PlayStation games were so popular was because PlayStation games employed 3D polygon graphics, which gamers loved. Ken Kutaragi was the Sony engineer who led the development of the PlayStation and Ken Kutaragi persuaded the company to use 3D graphics.

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Unity means that all parts of the essay are working toward achieving the same aim. The aim of any essay is to show that the thesis statement is either true or justified. The content of a paragraph should directly relate to the topic sentence. Likewise, the content of an essay must directly relate to the thesis statement. Any clause, sentence, or paragraph that strays from the central idea expressed in the thesis statement detracts from unity.

F. Now, underline the sentence that breaks the unity of the paragraph.

Hawaii's marine life today is rich and diverse and includes some special marine mammals. One of the most impressive of these is the humpback whale. Humpbacks are the largest marine species found in Hawaiian waters, and can grow up to 15 metres in length and 45,000 kg in weight. Humpbacks were heavily hunted for their blubber and were almost brought to extinction in the 1970s. Another marine mammal commonly found in the area is the spinner dolphin. These dolphins are very intelligent and social creatures. They live together in groups called pods and spend their time feeding and hunting together.

G. Read the essay and underline any errors found with unity, coherence, and cohesion.

Since emerging in the 1990s, the Internet has become an indispensable part of modern life. The Internet is used for social interaction, for work and study, entertainment, shopping, and financial transactions. While the Internet has made life easier, the Internet has also made people vulnerable to cybercrime, which poses some serious risks. There are some actions that can be taken to protect against these threats.

One of the simplest and easiest methods of online protection is using secure passwords. Using secure passwords is important because hackers are able to break into people's online accounts by exploiting weak and easily guessable passwords. An effective password should be at least eight characters long and include a combination of upper- and lower-case letters along with numbers and symbols. An effective password will make it much more difficult for a hacker to guess. Password managers are an effective and easy way to prevent online hacks. Password managers allocate and keep secure unique passwords for each online account, which means individuals are not required to create and memorise multiple complicated passwords.

To stay safe online use quality antivirus software. Quality antivirus software protects devices by blocking malicious software such as viruses and ransomware, which can infect smartphones or computers and delete important data or make smartphones and computers vulnerable to further attacks. Antivirus software can also protect users by cleaning devices to make them more secure. Antivirus software does this by scanning systems to detect and remove threats.

While using secure passwords and antivirus software offer sound protection, the best form of security is prevention. Prevention means avoiding the type of online behaviour that puts many users at risk in the first place. Visiting certain websites such as those that offer gambling or illegal file sharing is particularly risky. This is because cybercriminals target websites that offer gambling or illegal file sharing to distribute malicious programs that are imbedded in downloaded files or streamed media.

It is important for computer and smartphone users to maintain their online security. Three of the most effective methods of protection are creating strong passwords, installing a robust antivirus suite, and avoiding particular types of websites. Nonetheless, online shopping does have a number of advantages.