Coordinating Conjunctions

1. Focus

Explain Coordinating Conjunctions

Say: The words and and or can be used to join words, phrases, or sentence parts. These words are called coordinating conjunctions because they connect different parts of a sentence. The coordinating conjunction and helps readers connect similar things or ideas, as in the sentence “Zebras leave their homes and migrate south.” The coordinating conjunction or helps us connect different things and ideas, as in the sentence “They could be trampled or attacked.” Often, writers use coordinating conjunctions to connect items in a list. In a list of more than two items, commas appear between the items and the coordinating conjunction only appears before the last item, such as in the following sentence: “I went to the store to buy apples, oranges, and bananas.” Today we’ll learn about some different uses of the coordinating conjunctions and and or.

Model Using Coordinating Conjunctions

Display the modeling text (without underlining) on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

- Identify the coordinating conjunctions and and or.
- Explain how coordinating conjunctions help writers connect items in a list.

Preparation

Materials Needed

- Chart paper and markers
- Coordinating Conjunctions (BLM 11)
- Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation

If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling text (without underlining) and practice text onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson.

If necessary, copy the sentence frame from “Strategies to Support ELs” on chart paper.

Modeling Text

1. But some kinds of mammals, fish, birds, and insects do migrate.
2. Animals migrate on land, in the water, or in the sky.

Read sentence 1. Say: As I read the first sentence, I see the coordinating conjunction and. The word and is used to join a list of words—a list of which animals migrate. I notice that the animals in the list are separated by commas.

Read sentence 2. Say: In the second sentence, I see the coordinating conjunction or. The conjunction or is used to join three different ways of migrating. This is also a kind of list—a list of places where animals migrate. Again, the items in the list are separated by commas.
2. Rehearse

Practice Using Coordinating Conjunctions

Display the practice text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

1. They walk. They swim. They fly. They get where they need to go.
2. Some animals are looking for food. Some animals are looking for water.

Practice Text

Invite students to work with a partner to read the practice sentences. Ask them to think about how they could use the coordinating conjunction or to combine the ideas in the first group of sentences. Ask them to use the coordinating conjunction and to combine ideas in the second group of sentences. Students should write their sentences using conjunctions and be prepared to share them with the class.

If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Sentences Using Coordinating Conjunctions

Invite students to share their sentences containing coordinating conjunctions.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that in our writing we can use the coordinating conjunction and when we want to join two or more similar things or ideas. When we want to join two or more different or alternative ideas, we can use the coordinating conjunction or. We can use these words, along with commas, to help our readers make connections between ideas.

If you would like to give students additional practice recognizing and using coordinating conjunctions, ask them to complete BLM 11.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to share their answers to BLM 11. Provide feedback as necessary.

Strategies to Support ELs

**Beginning**

Provide practice in using the conjunction or. Point to a pencil and a crayon. **Ask: Do you want to use a pencil or a crayon?** Write **pencil or crayon** on chart paper. Repeat with other objects; for example, an apple or an orange, a cup or a glass, etc. Help students use the sentence frame to ask questions using or:

Do you want ______ or ______?

**Intermediate and Advanced**

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers. Encourage them to work together to read the following sentences and underline the coordinating conjunction and or or in each sentence.

Some animals walk and swim. Some animals walk or swim.
Do fish and birds migrate? Do fish or birds migrate?
Some animals need food and water. Do you want food or water?