

WRITING a discursive essay

10A Look at statements 1–3. Write one reason for and one reason against each statement. Give examples.

- 1 The media should be free to examine the private lives of public figures.
- 2 Positive images of celebrities in the media have a good effect on people.
- 3 The internet is the most reliable source of news and information.

B Work in groups and compare your ideas.

11A Read the essay and answer the questions.

- 1 Which of the topics in Exercise 10A is it about?
- 2 Do you agree with the writer's point of view?
- 3 Can you think of a good title for the essay?

These days the media is full of stories of celebrities' private lives: their relationships, rows, problems with weight and so on. In fact, the public seems to have a never-ending appetite for this type of gossip.

It could be argued that celebrities invite publicity, for instance by giving interviews or welcoming the media into their homes, despite knowing this will leave them open to public attention. Therefore, it is hypocritical for them to complain when the media shows interest in other aspects of their lives. Also, celebrities are influential role models to many people and because of this, their private lives should be open to public examination. Additionally, the public have the right to know about the rich and famous since it is our money that supports them, through sales of tickets, DVDs and music downloads.

However, there are several reasons why celebrities deserve a certain level of privacy. Firstly, while some people actively seek fame, others do not. For example, a person might want to be a great tennis player but not wish to suffer media intrusion into their or their family's private lives. Secondly, although reporters might claim an item is 'in the public interest' often, in fact, they are more interested in selling a sensational story than in investigating something of genuine importance. Lastly, the unwelcome attentions of reporters and photographers can put celebrities under great stress or sometimes even in danger. Just think of Michael Jackson or Princess Diana.

On balance, I believe that celebrities have the right to the same kind of privacy as anyone else. Just because, on some occasions, they invite interest, often in order to publicise their work or please their fans, this does not mean that, on other occasions, they should not be able to say 'no'.

B Read the essay again and underline the correct alternative.

- 1 The introductory paragraph *explains why the topic is of interest* / *gives the writer's opinion about the topic*.
- 2 Paragraph two gives points *for* / *for and against* the idea.
- 3 Paragraph three gives points *against* / *for and against* the idea.
- 4 The conclusion *asks the reader's* / *gives the writer's* opinion.

LEARN TO use linkers of contrast

12A Look at sentences 1–4. Circle the linker which is used to show a contrasting idea.

- 1 Celebrities invite publicity despite knowing this will leave them open to public attention.
- 2 While some people seek fame, others never want or plan for it.
- 3 Although a reporter might claim that a story is 'in the public interest', often they are more interested in selling a sensational story.
- 4 However, there are a number of reasons why celebrities deserve our sympathy.

B Work in pairs and answer the questions.

- 1 What punctuation follows *However*?
- 2 Which form follows *despite*?
- 3 In sentences 1, 2 and 3, which is the main clause?
- 4 Do the linkers in 1, 2 and 3 introduce the main clause or the subordinate clause?

C Use the linkers in brackets to connect the ideas in two different ways.

- 1 some celebrities are good role models for young people / others set a negative example (however, although)
- 2 anonymously published internet news is unreliable / many people rely on it as a main source of information (despite, while)
- 3 false reports of celebrity deaths are common / some people still believe them (while, however)
- 4 the scandal damaged his reputation / he still has millions of fans (although, despite)

13A Write notes for the four sections of a discursive essay on one of the other topics in Exercise 10A.

speakout TIP

A discursive (or 'for and against') essay is different from an opinion essay. In an opinion essay, the writer starts out by stating his/her opinion; in a discursive essay, the writer gives a balanced view and in the conclusion can either state his/her opinion or give a summary of both sides of the argument. Check the notes you have made to see that your introduction and conclusion are appropriate.

B Write the essay (250–300 words).



Conjunctions

Lesson code: S8IM-K58A-D9CT

INTERMEDIATE

1 Coordinating conjunctions

A **conjunction** is a word or phrase that joins two parts of a sentence. **Coordinating conjunctions** are used to join two parts of a sentence that may be single words or clauses. Study the table below.

Conjunction	Use and examples
and	To add or connect two things together: Bob and Jill live in the same street. To suggest that one idea happens after another idea: I called his name, and he came. To suggest that one idea is the result of another: I heard the weather forecast and decided not to go out.
but	To suggest a contrast that is unexpected: He has no money but he is happy.
or	To suggest alternatives: We can start the lesson at 3pm or we can begin at 4pm.
yet	To make a contrast: Joseph plays rugby well, yet his favorite sport is football.
so	To suggest a result: It was raining so we decided to stay in. To mean "as well" or "in addition": Joe is hungry and so am I.
for	To mean "because" in very formal or literary contexts: I don't know what he looks like for I have never met him.



2 Practice 1

Complete the sentences with 'and', 'but', 'or', 'yet', 'so' or 'for'. More than one answer may be possible.

1. The dog hasn't eaten all day _____ she must be very hungry.
2. We can go out for a pizza _____ we can eat in. It's up to you.
3. George is coming to town, _____ I don't know if he'll visit us.
4. It's not very polite to eat _____ talk at the same time.
5. It's cold outside, _____ I suggest you put on your coat.
6. I got out of bed _____ had a shower.
7. It was raining outside _____ it was also quite warm, _____ we decided to take the dog for a walk.
8. I turned on the television, _____ there was nothing interesting to watch.
9. We decided to go home _____ it was getting late.

3 Subordinating conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions are used to join a subordinate dependent clause to a main clause. Study the sentences below and match the clauses to their meaning.

1. It looks as though you've never met before.
2. You can come to my party as long as you don't bring Mike!
3. Tom went swimming although it was raining.
4. Ring the doorbell once you arrive.
5. You can go whenever you want.
6. I won't call you unless there's a problem.
7. Don't call me until I finish work. I'll be busy all day.
8. He called me by my first name since we already knew each other well.
9. He was shot in the back as he tried to escape.

- a. any time, when
- b. as if, like
- c. as soon as
- d. because
- e. despite the fact that
- f. except if
- g. if, on the condition that
- h. not before
- i. while



4 Practice 2

Complete the sentences with a suitable conjunction from Exercise 3.

1. Angela was smiling although she was feeling sad.
2. You can have another chocolate _____ you finish your homework first.
3. I can't pay you _____ I get my salary. I'm broke at the moment.
4. _____ it rains this weekend, we will go to the beach.
5. Alain speaks German very well _____ he has lived there for over 20 years.
6. Let me know _____ you arrive at the station. I'll come and pick you up.
7. I love riding my bike. I often go for a ride _____ I have a free afternoon.
8. Look at the clouds. It looks _____ it's going to rain.
9. Robert called me _____ I was making dinner.

5 Practice 3

Make one sentence from two like in the example.

as soon as	because	before	even though
so that	after	while	

1. I left at 1pm. He arrived at 1.15pm.
He arrived after I left .
2. I left at 1pm. He arrived at 12.45pm.
He
3. I left at 1pm. He arrived at 1.01pm.
He
4. We decided to go for a walk. It was raining.
We
5. I went to bed early. I was tired.
I
6. I was swimming in the sea. A jellyfish stung me.
A jellyfish
7. He put on his glasses. He could read the newspaper.
He



Transitional Words and Phrases

Transitional words and phrases show the relationship between ideas. Transitions are used to link ideas within a sentence, within a paragraph, or within a longer piece of writing. Transitions help the reader to follow the writer's train of thought.

Let's say I want to show the relationship between these two sentences:

The river was gradually changing its course. The cliff continued to erode.

Is the river causing the erosion or not? Adding a transitional can help the reader to know the answer:

*The river was gradually changing its course; **therefore** the cliff continued to erode.*

Different transitional modifiers imply different meanings; how does the meaning change in each of the following?

*The river was gradually changing its course. **In addition**, the cliff continued to erode.*

*The river was gradually changing its course; **however**, the cliff continued to erode.*

Below are a list of transitional words and phrases:

To compare or link similar ideas:

also	moreover	in addition	too
besides	furthermore	in the same way	each of
similarly	both	and	likewise

To contrast or limit ideas:

however	nevertheless	on the other hand	still
even so	although	and yet	but
conversely	in spite of	neither...nor	on the contrary
instead			

To indicate time or position:

meanwhile	eventually	first (second, etc.)	before
afterward	nearby	later	soon

To show cause and effect:

therefore	as a result	accordingly
consequently	thus	because

To offer a summary, an example or a conclusion:

for instance	for example	after all
in fact	in conclusion	in other words
on the whole	in short	on the other hand
as a result	therefore	thus