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**Type of activity**

Speaking. Group work.

**Aim**

To practise using linkers.

**Task**

To invent and tell a story using linkers.

**Preparation**

Make one copy of the worksheet for each group of four to five students. Cut up the cards as indicated.

**Timing**

30 minutes

**Procedure**

- 1 Elicit different types of book (romance, thriller, science fiction, biography, autobiography, history book, detective story, etc.).
- 2 Divide the class into groups of four to five students and give each group the top section of the worksheet with the word cards removed. Ask the groups to make three new book titles using some of the words, e.g. *Love Ship* (a romance), *Robot Killer* (a science fiction story), etc. Ask the groups to read their titles to the class.
- 3 Ask each group to choose one of their titles. Explain that each group is going to develop this story. Then ask the groups to decide on the first line of their story.
- 4 Place a set of linker cards face down in the middle of each group. Students take it in turns to pick a card and add the next sentence to their story. For example, the first sentence of the story *Love Ship* is: *John and Camilla were sunbathing on the ship*. Student A picks up the card *because* and continues the story: *John decided to get some cocktails because he was thirsty*. Student B picks up a card and adds the next sentence to the story. This continues until all the cards have been used. (Encourage students to make notes about the story as they add each sentence to help them when they retell the stories in stage 5.) Circulate

and monitor, helping with vocabulary as necessary.

- 5 Regroup the students and ask them to tell each other their stories.

**Follow up**

- 1 Immediately after the activity, it may be useful to conduct an error correction session based on the students' accuracy in using narrative tenses and linkers.
- 2 For homework, ask students to write up their stories or even create a class book of short stories. Consider copying this book and distributing it to other classes or displaying the stories on a noticeboard.

**Notes & comments**

This activity is designed to practise linkers and the stories the students produce may not sound natural as there will be an unusually high number of linkers. This should be pointed out to the students, especially if they go on to develop and write up their stories for homework.

# Storytellers



**shame** **killer** **never** **old**  
**KING** **sudden** **of** **ship** **travel** **HOTEL**  
**for** **love** **IN** **murder** **the** **time** **ANGEL** **summer**  
**DEAD** **man** **robot** **nights** **PLANET** **two**



as soon as	and	while	then	because
by the time	so	just as	after	just as
during	as	but	when	before
as soon as	and	while	then	because
by the time	so	just as	after	just as
during	as	but	when	before

# Cyberstudy

## Warm up

- 1 If you are not studying in an English-speaking country, ask if anyone has been to an English-speaking country to study English. Ask what it was like and how useful it was.
- 2 Brainstorm what a 'virtual language school' is, whether anyone has used one on the Internet and what differences there might be between virtual schools and more traditional ones. In groups of four, ask the students to list the pros (positive points) and cons (negative points) of each form of learning, e.g. accessibility, cost, native-speaker pronunciation teachers, etc. Feedback as a whole class.

## Main activity

- 1 Write on the board: '*The virtual language school – not language travel – is now the best way to learn English.*' To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?
- 2 In their groups, tell the students to make notes on what they would include in the composition and prioritise their notes.
- 3 Give each student a copy of the Model Composition and ask them to read it and discuss in their groups whether they agree with the writer or not and why. After five minutes, feedback as a whole class.
- 4 Tell the students to match the discourse markers in italics in the text with those in the boxes. Show how (1) has been done as an example. **Note:** some can be used in more than one box. Feedback as a whole class.

### Answer key

a 6 b 8 c 2 d 4 e 3 f 10 g/h 5, 9 i 7

- 5 Elicit how these discourse markers are words or phrases that highlight the writer's attitude and emphasise the logical connections within the text. Demonstrate the use of commas after many of the discourse markers, and point out how *still* and *however* both link a positive and negative sentence, but *while* and *whereas* link positive and negative clauses and are put at the front of a sentence, e.g.  
*Learning with a teacher is preferable. Still/However, it is not essential for everybody.*  
*Whereas/While this is preferable, it is not essential for everybody.*  
Elicit other sequencing discourse markers, e.g. *secondly*, *thirdly*, etc.
- 6 Ask the students to plan their own composition, using their notes from step 2. Explain that they do not have to write a finished composition but have five minutes to write a plan in note form.
- 7 After five minutes, put the students in pairs. Ask them to explain the logic of their composition plans to each other and discuss which discourse markers they could use to indicate the flow of ideas and opinions.
- 8 After five minutes, ask the students to expand their plan into a 200-word essay using appropriate discourse markers. If there is sufficient time at the end of the lesson, ask them to swap the first draft of their composition with their partner and give their partner's composition a mark out of ten for the clarity of its organisation.

## Follow up

- Ask the students to write a 180-word composition with this title: '*Education is wasted on some people. Discuss.*'
- Ask the students to write an advertisement for a virtual school for a magazine for young people.

## Model Composition

'The virtual language school – not language travel – is now the best way to learn English. Discuss.'

<sup>1</sup> *In my opinion*, studying English in countries where it is the first language will always be the ideal. <sup>2</sup> *However*, many factors always have to be taken into account when choosing a language course.

<sup>3</sup> *Firstly*, there is cost. <sup>4</sup> *While* travelling to experience the language in its home environment is always preferable, it is expensive both in terms of time and money. <sup>5</sup> *As a result*, more and more people have turned to virtual internet schools which are accessible from a computer anywhere in the world at anytime of the day. <sup>6</sup> *In addition*, virtual schools now employ native-speakers who offer online pronunciation practice and conversation classes.

Secondly, there is the place where you learn. <sup>7</sup> *In general*, a 'real' classroom with real people will always generate more communication than a computer screen and keyboard ever could. <sup>8</sup> *Similarly*, a virtual school can never provide those important extras such as a study centre or close contact with an English-speaking homestay family. <sup>9</sup> *In consequence*, they will never replace the real thing.

<sup>10</sup> *To sum up*, virtual language schools are a useful alternative to, but not a replacement for, traditional English language courses in English-speaking countries. For those who do not have the time or money to travel, they are the next best thing.



Match the discourse markers from the text with similar markers in each box:

<b>Linked ideas that agree</b>	
a	Besides,
b	In the same way,
<b>Linked ideas that do not agree</b>	
c	Still,
d	Whereas (+), (-)

<b>Opinions</b>	
On the whole,	i
As I see it,	j (1) In my opinion

<b>Ideas in a sequence</b>	
e (i.e. 1, 2, 3)	Lastly, (i.e. 1, 2, 3)
f	In conclusion,
<b>One idea is the logical result of another</b>	
g	So
h	Consequently,