

TAMIU

University College

Writing Center

Sentence variety exercise 1

Coordinating Conjunctions

The most common way to put nouns, verbs, objects, or other parts of sentences together is by using one or more of the coordinating conjunctions: **For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So** (FANBOYS).

FANBOYS can join subjects in a sentence:

S S S S S
 Michael Jordan, Scottie Pippen, Luke Longley, Dennis Rodman, **and** Ron Harper
V
 started Game 6 of the NBA Championship Series.

Coordinating conjunctions can also be used to make verbs more complex:

S V V V V
 They scrapped, scrambled, **and** hustled **but** refused to quit.

They also add more elements as objects of a verb:

S V Obj. Obj. Obj. Obj.
 During the parade, clowns threw candy, balloons, **and** confetti **but** no kisses **nor**
Obj.
 tantrums.

Additionally, FANBOYS attach more nouns to a prepositional phrase:

S V Prep. Obj. Obj. Obj. Obj.
 The celebrants caroused through the streets, avenues, alleys, **and** malls.

Most commonly, using the coordinating conjunctions to join an independent clause to another independent clause or to a dependent clause helps create more complex sentences. However, remember one basic rule about punctuation: **When a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS) joins two independent clauses, always place a comma *before* the conjunction:**

	for	
	and	
	nor	
Independent clause	, but	independent clause.
	or	
	yet	
	so	

For example:

This morning Hubert told his mother he'd be late for supper, ^{independent clause} **but** she forgot. ^{independent clause}

The clock read 7:45, ^{independent clause} **so** she began to fret. ^{independent clause}

She told herself not to worry, ^{independent clause} **yet** she couldn't stop pacing and peering out the window. ^{independent clause}

If the conjunction (FANBOYS) joins an independent clause to a dependent clause or phrase (an incomplete thought or fragment), no comma is needed:

^{Independent clause} ^{and}
 ^{nor}
^{Independent clause} **but** ^{dependent clause or phrase.}
 ^{or}
 ^{yet}

(Notice that this doesn't apply to "for" or "so.")

For example:

She thought she should call the police ^{independent clause} **but** decided against it. ^{dependent phrase}

Neither her faith in Hubert ^{dependent phrase} **nor** her eternal optimism kept her from acting. ^{independent clause}

In the kitchen, she cut from a thick slab of the roast beef ^{independent clause} **and** scowled over her shoulder at her roommate. ^{dependent phrase}

Practice 1

Directions: In the following sentences, decide if changes in punctuation used with FANBOYS need to be made. Add or cross out commas as necessary; if the sentence is correct, make no changes.

1. The red-haired girl packed a lunch, and grabbed her fishing rod.
2. She skipped across the yard but crept under the fence that bordered the pasture.
3. The Holsteins stood in the shade of the elms on the far side so she ignored them, and trotted down the hill toward the creek.
4. She pushed over a rotting log carefully, yet rolled the log over her big toe.

5. Carrie screamed in pain for she had a two-inch sliver stuck under her toe nail.
6. She could cry and feel sorry for herself, or Carrie could suck it up and keep hiking.

Practice 2

Directions: On a separate sheet of paper, write seven sentences using all seven coordinating conjunctions at least once with a comma. Then, write five sentences that do not need a comma using five of the seven coordinating conjunctions (not “for” or “so”) at least once each.