Most pieces of formal writing are organised in a similar way: introduction; development of main ideas or arguments; conclusion. Linking words and phrases join clauses, sentences and paragraphs together.

A piece of writing or text may include the following:

- one idea is linked to another
- an alternative is presented
- an objection is made
Connectives

The main linking words and phrases are grouped below according to the similarity of their meaning to the three basic connectives and, or, but. Some can be used to link paragraphs and others can only be used to link ideas within a paragraph.

1. enumeration (points in order)
   a) listing
   b) transition (leads to a new stage)
   c) summary (gives a summary or conclusion)
   d) reference (refers to what was said before)
   e) example
   f) result (the consequence of what was said before)
   g) place (refers to things in or outside the document)
   h) time (refers to other studies)

2. or
   i) reformulation (expresses something in another way)
   j) replacement (expresses an alternative)

3. but
   k) contrast (presents a different view)
   l) concession (agrees that something is good, with limitations)

I. and

a) Listing

1. Enumeration indicates a cataloguing of what is being said.
   Most lists use clearly defined groups of words:

   first,  
   furthermore,  
   finally,

   one  
   a second  
   a third  
   etc.

   first(ly),  
   second(ly),  
   third(ly), ...  
   etc.

   to begin/start with,  
   in the second place,  
   moreover,  
   to conclude,

   above all  
   last but not least  
   mark the end of an ascending order

   first and foremost  
   first and most importantly  
   mark the beginning of a descending order
2. **Addition** to what has been previously indicated.

   i. **Reinforcement** (includes confirmation):

   | Above all | Indeed |
   | Actually  | In addition |
   | Additionally | Moreover |
   | Again     | Not only . . . but also . . . |
   | Also      | Notably |
   | As well (as) | Obviously |
   | Besides   | Particularly |
   | Especially | Specifically |
   | Further   | Then |
   | Furthermore | Too |
   | What is more |

   ii. **Comparison** (similarity to what has preceded):

   | Also | In the same way |
   | Both . . . and . . . | Likewise |
   | Correspondingly | Similarly |
   | Equally | Too |

b) **Transition** (can lead to a new stage in the sequence of thought):

   | Now | Regarding |
   | Turning to |
   | With respect/regard to |

   | As for |
   | As to |

   Often used when discussing something briefly

c) **Summary** (a generalisation or summing up of what has preceded):

   | Altogether |
   | Hence |
   | In brief |
   | In conclusion |
   | In short |
   | Overall |

   | Then |
   | Therefore |
   | Thus |
   | To conclude |
   | To sum up |
   | To summarise |
d) Reference (refers back to previous sentences):

- and
- mainly
- as follows
- mostly
- chiefly
- namely
- for instance
- notably
- for example
- or
- in other words
- particularly
- in particular
- such as
- including
- that is

e) Example:

- for example
- for instance
- such as
- to illustrate
- as an illustration
- to demonstrate

f) Result
(expresses the consequence or result from what is implicit in the preceding sentence or sentences):

- accordingly
- now
- as a result
- so
- as a consequence
- so that
- because of
- the consequence is
- consequently
- the result is
- for this/that reason
- then
- hence
- therefore
- in order that
- thus

g) Place:

- above
- in front
- adjacent
- in the background
- at the side
- in the foreground
- behind
- there
- below
- to the left
- elsewhere
- to the right
- here
h) **Time:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Expression</th>
<th>Equivalent Time Expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>after a while</td>
<td>now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>afterwards</td>
<td>once</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at last</td>
<td>presently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at that time</td>
<td>previously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at the same time</td>
<td>shortly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>before</td>
<td>simultaneously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>currently</td>
<td>since</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>earlier</td>
<td>soon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eventually</td>
<td>subsequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finally</td>
<td>then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>formerly</td>
<td>thereafter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the meantime</td>
<td>until</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the past</td>
<td>until now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>initially</td>
<td>whenever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>later</td>
<td>while</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meanwhile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **or**

i) **Reformulation** *(expresses something in another way):*

- better
- in other words
- in that case
- rather
- that is
- that is to say
- to put it (more) simply

j) **Replacement** *(expresses an alternative to what has preceded):*

- again
- alternatively
- another possibility would be
- better/worse still
- on the other hand
- rather
- the alternative is
3. **but**

**k) Contrast**

- by (way of) contrast
- conversely
- in comparison
- in fact
- in reality
- instead
- on the contrary
- (on the one hand) . . . on the other hand . . .
- then

**l) Concession** (indicates that the previous view is accepted with reservations):

- admittedly
- after all
- all the same
- although
- although this may be true
- at the same time
- besides
- despite
- doubtless
- even if/though
- even so
- however

- in spite of
- naturally
- nevertheless
- no doubt
- nonetheless
- notwithstanding
- only
- still
- under certain circumstances
- up to a point
- while
- yet

Exercise

Can you insert appropriate transitional words in the following sentences?

In the first exercise the category of transitional word is given. In the second exercise you will have to decide which category is most appropriate.

(taken from Parks, AF, Levernier, JA and Hollowell, IM 1996, Structuring paragraphs  A guide to effective writing, Bedford/St. Martin’s, Boston, pp. 119-120)

A.

Our state's correctional system is plagued with problems. (a) __________, (example) high officials increase their personal wealth by awarding building and catering contracts to disreputable companies in return for bribes. (b) __________, (addition) promotions within the system are made on the basis of politics, not merit. (c) __________, the system is filled __________ (result) with people at the top who know little about what they are doing. (d) __________, (addition) careless security measures, allowing trusted inmates to control certain operations of the institution, are part of the growing problem. But one increasing tendency in particular is doing harm to the system's image and efficiency. This is the tendency of officials who are charged with important tasks and who make faulty decisions to cover up their mistakes. (e) __________, one would think that amid all the strife some effort __________ (conclusion) would be made to rectify these problems, but a seemingly dogged determination to resist change overshadows the system.

B.

Genetic screening in business, or testing the genes of employees to see if they are susceptible to workplace-related diseases, may present problems for the tested. (a) __________, the genetic screening tests and technology in general are in their infancy stages. (b) __________, many physicians and health professionals doubt their reliability. (c) __________, once genetic information is recorded on employees, it cannot always be kept secret. Even though employers are assured that their medical files are confidential, clerical staff have access to them. (d) __________, if they are entered into a computer data base, they are available to anyone with access. (e) __________, some argue that such screening procedures are violations of personal rights. (f) __________, many cite similarities between genetic screening and drug testing, noting that both involve a process of obtaining information from unwilling individuals that might affect them adversely. Opponents of genetic screening point out that some employees with the potential for workplace diseases would rather run the risk than lose their jobs.
Answers to Exercise  In each case there may be several possible choices

Text A

(a) Example:  For one thing  For instance
               Frequently  For example  Often

(b) Addition:  Furthermore  Moreover
               In addition  What is more

(c) Result:  As a result
              Consequently

(d) Addition:  In addition
              What is more

(e) Conclusion:  In short

Text B

(a) Example:  First  First of all  For one thing

(b) Result:  Consequently  Hence  Therefore

(c) Addition:  Second  Moreover
              Further  What is more
              Furthermore

(d) Example:  Indeed  Specifically

(e) Result:  As a result
              Consequently  Hence
              Thus

(f) Example:  In particular  Indeed  Significantly