

Your Teaching Guide to Conjunction Junction

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Running Time: 3 minutes

Grammar Rock

These imaginative animated films should be presented as part of the ongoing classroom program. They can be used either to introduce or to review parts of speech. Lively rock music and bouncy lyrics enhance the action, providing unforgettable grammar lessons students will want to see again and again — and will want to sing.

Conjunction Junction

Freight cars representing conjunctions hook together other freight cars representing words, phrases, and clauses in this imaginative film. The chubby little switchman explains that most of the work is done by three conjunctions and that the words on both sides of a conjunction should balance (be of the same grammatical class).

Synopsis

At the maze of tracks that forms *Conjunction Junction*, the jolly little switchman climbs aboard his three favorite freight cars — *And*, *But*, and *Or*. He explains that *And* is an "additive," like *this and that*. *But*, that's sort of the opposite — not *this*, but *that*. Then there's *Or*, when you have a choice — *this or that*.

The switchman gives more examples of words linked by the conjunction *And* — *milk and honey*, *bread and butter*, *peas and rice*. The conjunctions *Either* and *Or* give a choice — *either now or later*. The conjunctions *Neither* and *Nor* give no choice — *neither now nor ever*.

Conjunctions also hook up phrases, like *out of the frying pan and into the fire*. Clauses, too, are linked by conjunctions: *He cut loose the sandbags, but he couldn't get the balloon any higher. Let's go up to the mountains or (go) down to the seas. You should always say thank your, or at least say please.*

"I'm going to get you there," promises the switchman, as he climbs aboard a train of conjunctions, "if you're very careful."

Before Viewing

If you are introducing conjunctions, you might explain that some words in our language are used to join other words or groups of words. Such "joining" words are called

conjunctions. (Write *conjunctions* on the board.) The word *conjunction* itself means a "joining together."

Then you can ask:

- Can anyone name a conjunction? (Write on the board conjunctions named correctly.)

Tell students they are going to see a film titled *Conjunction Junction*. What do they think goes on in a place called Conjunction Junction? Let's watch the film and find out.

Note: You might want to show the film several times. After the first showing, if you give students copies of the following verses, they can sing along with the film:

Conjunction Junction,

What's their function?

Hookin' up words and phrases and clauses.

Conjunction Junction,

How's that function?

I've got three favorite cars

That get most of my job done.

Conjunction Junction,

What's your function?

I got *And*, *But* and *Or*

That'll get you pretty far.

And . . . that's an additive,

Like *this* and *that*.

And then there's *But*,

That's sort of the opposite,

Not *this*, but *that*.

And then there's *Or* — *O* — *R* —

When you have a choice.

This or *that*.

And, *But*, and *Or* get you pretty far.

After Viewing

Depending on students' learning levels and abilities, you might ask questions such as:

- The switchman said he had three favorite cars. What are they? (*and*, *but*, and *or*).
- What is meant by an *additive*? (An additive is something that is added.)

- Which conjunctions give you a choice? (*either, or*)
- Which conjunctions give you no choice? (*neither, nor*)
- What is a phrase? (Write on the board a definition such as, *A phrase is a group of related words that does not contain a verb and its subject.*)
- Who can give us an example of a phrase used in the film? (*out of the frying pan; into the fire; through the gardens; down by the lake*)
- What is a clause? (Write on the board a definition such as, *A clause is a group of related words that contain a verb and its subject and is used as part of a sentence.*)
- Does anyone remember a clause from the film? (*but he couldn't get the balloon any higher; when I'm usually wide-awake*)
- In the film, what did the switchman mean when he said his function was "hooking up phrases and clauses that balance"?
- What would be wrong with sentences like these? (Write on the board: *You should always say thank you or into the frying pan. He cut loose the sandbags but into the fire.*)

Follow-Up Activities

1. *Additional Conjunctions*

Depending on students' learning levels and abilities,

you might want to point out several other commonly used conjunctions such as *because* and pairs such as *both . . . and, not only . . . but also*, and *whether . . . or*. You might write on the board examples such as the following:

We waited a long time because the bus was late.

Both Mary and I like chocolate ice cream.

Leroy has not only a cat but also a mouse.

I can't decide whether I want a hamburger or a hot dog.

2. *Conjunction Practice*

Depending on their learning levels and abilities, the students can

a. make up sentences using the following conjunctions: *and, but, or, because, either . . . or, neither . . . nor, both . . . and, not only . . . but also.*

b. make up balanced words, clauses, and phrases joined with *and* and *or*.

Grammar Rock Series

A Noun Is a Person, Place, or Thing

Conjunction Junction

Lolly, Lolly, Lolly – Get Your Adverbs Here

Verb: That's Where the Action Is

Interjections!

Unpack Your Adjectives

Rufus Xavier Sarsaparilla (Pronouns)