

Curley's wife lay with a half-covering of yellow hay. And the meanness and the plannings and the discontent and the ache for attention were all gone from her face. She was very pretty and simple, and her face was sweet and young. Now her rouged cheeks and her reddened lips made her seem alive and sleeping very lightly. The curls, tiny little sausages, were spread on the hay behind her head, and her lips were parted.

—John Steinbeck

Coordinating Conjunctions (aka, “fanboys”)

standard punctuation style = use a comma between independent clauses

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|----|
| for | and | nor | but | or | yet | so |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|----|

This sentence has two independent clauses:

The task was not to be assumed lightly, for it was men as well as starfish that we sought to save.
 —Loren Eiseley

This sentence does not need commas because there is only one independent clause:

I shaved and showered and dressed and got my raincoat out and went downstairs and looked out of the front door. —Raymond Chandler

Correlative Conjunctions (aka, “paired glue words”)

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| both . . . and | either . . . or | neither . . . nor | never . . . nor |
| not . . . but | not . . . nor | not only . . . but (also) | whether . . . or |

Either the world is too slack or I am not taut enough. —Henry Miller

There was neither time nor desire to consider moral or ethical issues. —Victor Frankl

Conjunctive Adverbs (aka, “signpost with a semicolon”)

standard punctuation style = use a semicolon between independent clauses

| | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| accordingly | afterwards | also | besides | consequently |
| earlier | furthermore | hence | however | incidentally |
| indeed | instead | later | likewise | moreover |
| nevertheless | next | otherwise | similarly | still |
| then | therefore | thus | | |

The silence is not actually suppression; instead, it is all there is. —Annie Dillard

Notice that this sentence drops the “however” but keeps the semicolon:

Japanese bayonets were fixed; ours weren't. —William Manchester

Coordinating connectives listed by function:

1) Adding Details or Emphasis

| | | | | |
|--------------|----------|---------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| also | and | besides | both . . . and | furthermore |
| incidentally | moreover | not only . . . but (also) | | indeed |

2) Indicating Time Relationships

| | | | |
|------------|---------|------------|-------|
| afterwards | earlier | henceforth | later |
| meanwhile | next | then | |

3) Proposing Alternatives

| | | | |
|-----------|-------------------|-----------------|-----|
| Positive: | either . . . or | or | |
| Negative: | neither . . . nor | never . . . nor | nor |
| | not . . . but | not . . . nor | |
| Neutral: | whether . . . or | | |

4) Revealing Cause and Result

| | | | |
|-------------|-----|--------------|------|
| accordingly | and | consequently | for |
| hence | so | therefore | thus |

5) Stating Conditions

| | | | |
|-----------------|----|---------|-----------|
| either . . . or | or | or else | otherwise |
|-----------------|----|---------|-----------|

6) Making Contrasts or Comparisons

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|
| but | however | instead | likewise | nevertheless |
| nonetheless | otherwise | similarly | still | yet |