

The Seventh Lecture

Opinion Paragraphs

In this lecture you will learn how to:

- distinguish between fact and opinion.
- organize and write paragraphs expressing opinions and arguments.
- use transition words to express causality.
- use modal expressions to make recommendations.
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1- Facts and opinions

- A *fact* is a piece of information that is true.

That film was three hours long.

- An *opinion* is an idea or belief about a particular subject. *That film was boring.*

- **Why do writers use facts?**

Writers use facts to support their opinions and to show why they hold their beliefs. An opinion paragraph

Q/Read the letter to the editor of a newspaper on page 33. Answer the questions.

Q/ Do the exercises on page 34.

2- Modal auxiliaries

- Using modal auxiliaries

When you speak, you introduce opinions with phrases like *I think*, *In my opinion*, and *I believe*. In general, these introductory phrases are not needed in writing. They can even make you sound less sure of your ideas. Instead, writers use grammatical methods such as modal auxiliary verbs and transition words to express their opinions. Modal auxiliary verbs show the strength of a writer's opinion or argument.

See the examples on page 25.

3- Connectors of cause and effect

How to use connectors of cause and effect for expressing opinions. **Because**, **since**, and **so** are connectors of cause and effect. They Join two ideas when one idea causes or explains the other. **Because** and **since** introduce the cause or reason, and **so** and **therefore** introduce the effect or result:

cause / reason

effect / result

petrol is becoming scarce and expensive, we should develop electric cars
(JOIN THEM)

For example:

- **Because** *petrol is becoming scarce and expensive, we should develop electric cars.*
- *We should develop electric cars, **since** petrol is becoming scarce and expensive.*
- *Petrol is becoming scarce and expensive, **so** we should develop electric cars.*

NOTE: *Therefore* is slightly different. It joins the ideas in two sentences:

- *Petrol is becoming scarce and expensive. **Therefore**, we should develop electric cars.*

2- Punctuation note

- 1- When *because* or *since* begin a sentence, use a comma after the first part of the sentence (the cause).
- 2- When the effect or result comes first, don't use a comma before *because* and *since*.
- 3- A result or effect beginning with *so* is usually the second part of a sentence. Use a comma before *so*.
- 4- Use *Therefore* after a full stop.
- 5- Use a comma after *Therefore*.

Q/ Do the exercises on pages 37-39