

Conjunctive Adverbs & How to Use Them: Explanatory Report

The word adverb literally means “to the verb” in Latin. Over time, grammarians have included many types of words in the adverb category. Today, it is sometimes called a catch-all for words that don’t fit in any other category. Adverbs encompass all the structures that answer questions (how, where, when, and why) about a verb, intensifying words that modify adverbs and adjectives, and connecting words that define the relationship between sentences. This last category is known as conjunctive adverbs. These adverbs are placed at the beginning of a second independent clause to establish its relationship to a first independent clause. Conjunctive adverbs are also called sentence adverbs to reflect the fact that they modify the entire sentence rather than just the verb. They can be used in two simple sentences or in one compound sentence. In either case, they are always separated by a comma.

Two Simple Sentences: *Bob was supposed to pick up his roommate at the airport. Instead, he was stuck in traffic miles away.*

One Compound Sentence: *Bob was supposed to pick up his roommate at the airport; instead, he was stuck in traffic miles away.*

Common Conjunctive Adverbs			
accordingly	for instance	in fact	on the other hand
afterward	further	in short	otherwise
also	furthermore	instead	perhaps
anyway	hence	likewise	similarly
as a result	however	moreover	subsequently
besides	in addition	namely	then
certainly	in any case	nevertheless	therefore
consequently	incidentally	next	thus
for example	indeed	on the contrary	undoubtedly

For this report, students will focus on conjunctive adverbs while exploring a unique characteristic of the English language, its large number of synonyms for any given word. These synonyms often have subtle nuances of meaning that writers should be aware of. Using a dictionary and possibly a thesaurus, students will group these thirty-four conjunctive adverbs into at least three categories based on their meanings. For example, students might determine that “on the contrary” and “nevertheless” belong in the same category or that “also” and “in addition” belong in the same category.

In the report, students will describe each category and list its adverbs. To illustrate the subtle differences in meaning within a category, students will select two adverbs in each category and explain the difference in their meanings. Then, students will write example sentence pairs illustrating the difference between the two adverbs.

Students may write the report in traditional paragraphs or they may use a graphic layout such as a table or bulleted list to present the information. No matter which form of presentation is used, the report will include the following information for each category.

Category Title

- Description—meaning of the adverbs in this category, why were they grouped together
- List—conjunctive adverbs in this category
- Illustrate differences in meaning—pick two adverbs in the category and explain how they are different
 - Examples—write two pairs of sentences that illustrate the difference between the two adverbs