In English there are many linking words – words which join clauses into sentences. The most common linking words are:

- **and** used to express the idea of addition (to link chronological events or events resulting from each other, and to join the elements of a series).
  
  We ate breakfast **and** went to school.
  I took my raincoat **and** umbrella.

- **but** used to express the idea of a contrast,
  
  He likes playing chess **but** is not good at it.
  She isn’t my best friend, **but** I can always rely on her.

- **or** used to express an alternative,
  
  I want to study medicine **or** physics.
  We can go to the cinema, **or** we could stay at home.

- **so** used to express the result of something,
  
  I hate being late, **so** I left home very early.
  Tom read until midnight **so** next morning he was very tired.

Other common linking words:

- **if** and **unless** used to express a condition,
  
  You can visit her in hospital **if** you want.
  I won’t help you **unless** you tell me the truth.

- **because** used to express the reason for something,
  
  Everybody likes him **because** he is very friendly.
  I didn’t come **because** I had a terrible headache.

- **till/until** used to express time,
  
  I’ll wait **till** you come home.
  You won’t get any sweets **until** you’ve finished your lunch.

- **After and before** used to talk about events happening one after the other,
  
  It’ll be weeks **before** we see our favourite teacher again.
  After I graduated, I started working as a lawyer in a local law firm.

- **while** used to talk about events happening at the same time or to express the idea of a contrast,
  
  He phoned **while** I was having a conversation with my grandmother.
  Robert loves basketball, **while** his brother prefers tennis.

- **although** and **though** used to express the idea of a contrast,
  
  Although she had a lot of friends, nobody offered to help her.
  I quite like him, **though** he can be very impolite and selfish.

Relative pronouns (e.g. **that**, **when**, **where**) are also linking words:

  They were sure **that** somebody was following them all the time.
  I last saw her **when** she was very little.
  Do you remember the place **where** we used to go after school?

## Circle the correct answer.

1. I’ve been to London many times **but** / **and** / **so** I have never visited Kew Gardens.

2. We will go camping **if** / **unless** / **after** it rains heavily.

3. Make sure you switch off all the lights **while** / **until** / **before** you go home.

4. I like Jane very much **so** / **and** / **but** I wouldn’t go on a long holiday with her.

5. Although / Because / If we were late, we missed the boat we were supposed to take.

6. I wanted to have a good seat, **so** / **because** / **and** I ordered a ticket online two weeks before the concert.

7. I’d love to move to Spain, **while** / **and** / **so** my wife would rather live where we live now.

8. Because / Although / Unless she has never been to an English-speaking country, her English is very fluent.

9. You can’t go out **after** / **until** / **while** you’ve cleaned your room.
Complete the gaps with the correct linking words.

1. The weather was awful, ____ we changed our plans and stayed at home.
2. They can’t go out tonight _______ they don’t have a babysitter to look after their children.
3. _______ our grandfather didn’t go to university, he is very knowledgeable.
4. It’s up to you – you can stay with us for the weekend ______ you can go home.
5. Is this the restaurant _______ we had our first date?
6. I wanted to become a musician _______ my parents persuaded me to study law.
7. We won’t have lunch _______ you come home.
8. I won’t tell you anything _______ you promise to keep a secret.

Complete the gaps in the text with the correct linking words.

Some people watch football matches at home. _____ but _____ I prefer watching them live at a football stadium. It’s certainly a better option for me _______ the tickets are very expensive. I don’t earn much, _____ I have to be very careful with money.

Some people say that _______ you are at a football stadium, you can’t really see what’s happening on the pitch. I can see their point _______ I don’t agree with them. Even _______ you can’t see everything very well, it’s still much more fun than watching a match on TV. _______ one more thing – you can ask players for autographs _______ or after the match. _______ you really want to see all the details, you can always record a match and watch it again on TV _______ you get back from a stadium.

The sentences below contain grammatical mistakes. Find them and write the sentences correctly.

1. I met my husband where we were both studying at the University of Oxford.
   I met my husband when we were both studying at the University of Oxford.

2. Because she is physically disabled, she still stays very active.

3. Unless you really want to pass this exam, you need to study much harder.

4. I turned his invitation down though I didn’t really fancy going out with him.

5. After using the camera, read this instruction manual to familiarize yourself with it.

6. My parents couldn’t afford to pay for my studies because I had to find a temporary job to pay my fees.

7. I can live with my parents after I get a job and a flat.