Time Words and Why Words

Teacher		**Class**	Year 3
Subject	English	**Topic**	Conjunctions
Date		**Room**	
Lesson length	60 minutes	**Country**	United Kingdom

Pupils learn to show time and cause with joining words. They build longer sentences with strips, cards and writing.

Curriculum links

- extending the range of sentences with more than one clause by using a wider range of conjunctions, including when, if, because, although [2]
- using conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause [2]
- Expressing time, place and cause using conjunctions [for example, when, before, after, while, so, because], adverbs [for example, then, next, soon, therefore], or prepositions [for example, before, after, during, in, because of] [2]

Learning objectives

- Students will use time conjunctions when, before, after and while to join clauses.
- Students will use because, so and therefore to explain cause and result clearly.
- Students will use adverbs and prepositions such as then, during and in for time.

Success criteria

- I can join two ideas with when, before, after or while.
- I can explain why with because, so or therefore.
- I can show time with then, during, in, before or after.

What students already know

Ask: What does and do in a sentence? Take 2 quick examples, then ask what because adds. Listen for joining ideas and giving a reason.

Key words

conjunction	a joining word that links two words or ideas together [1]
adverb	a word that tells when or why, like then and therefore [2], and can make relations between words clear [1]
preposition	a word that sits before a thing to show time or place, like during and in [2], and can describe relations of time [1]
when	a joining word that tells at what moment something happens [2]
because	a joining word that tells the reason why something happens [2]

Materials

- sentence strips with short clauses
- time word cards with when, before, after, while

Before the lesson

- Print and cut sentence strips and time word cards for Time Builders, one set per pair

- glue sticks, pencils and colouring pencils
- Slides 1-6 and 9-12 with projector
- Video clip 1 plays 0:00–2:32 on slide 6
- Worksheet Task A copies, one per pupil
- mini-whiteboards and pens
- Print Worksheet Task A, one copy per pupil
- Test Slide 6 Video clip 1 (0:00–2:32) with sound
- Set out glue sticks, pencils, colouring pencils and mini-whiteboards
- Put sorting mats and word banks on tables for support group

Lesson outline

0–8 min **Starter** 8 min · Whole class

To hook pupils and recall joining words for time and cause.

YOU DO

1. Welcome the class and use the hook: I got my morning all muddled — I cleaned my teeth after I woke up, or was it before? Help me fix it!
2. Show Slide 1 and Slide 2 and read the aims in pupil words.
3. Show Slide 3 mindmap and point to when, before, because, so and then.
4. Take quick hands-up ideas for which words show time and which show cause.

STUDENTS DO

1. Listen to the muddled morning and call out before or after to fix it.
2. Read the mindmap words aloud together.
3. Say one sentence they already know with and, but or because.

Say: Today we are joining ideas to make longer sentences. Time words tell us when it happened. Cause words tell us why it happened. Your job is to pick the word that fits best.

Ask: Which word tells us time: when or because? (when tells time; because tells cause or reason) · I was late ___ I missed the bell. Which fits, when or because? (because, it gives the reason)

Check understanding: Thumbs up for time word, thumbs down for cause word as you call when, because, before, so. Reteach any mixed pair with a new example if needed.

Support: Show picture cards for wake up and clean teeth so pupils can see the order. **Stretch:** Ask confident pupils to make a full fixed sentence with before or after.

Use: Slides 1-3

8–20 min **Teaching** 12 min · Whole class

To model how conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions show time and cause.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 4 and explain the three helpers with actions for joining, telling when, and sitting before a thing.
2. Show Slide 5 vote: read I ran fast because I was late, I ran fast when the whistle blew, I ran fast so I got there first.
3. Play Slide 6 Video clip 1 (0:00–2:32) and ask pupils to listen for so and because.
4. Model joining on the board and label time or cause.

STUDENTS DO

1. Vote for the best sentence on Slide 5 and say if it shows time or cause.
2. Watch the clip and put a finger up each time they hear so or because.
3. Copy the modelled joined sentence and underline the joining word.

Say: A conjunction links two words or ideas together [1]. Conjunctions such as when, before, after and while can express time [2]. Conjunctions such as because and so can express cause [2]. Adverbs like then and therefore and prepositions like during and in can also show time and cause [2].

Worked example: Short ideas: I put on my coat. It rained. Step 1 pick time word when. Step 2 join: I put on my coat when it rained. Step 3 check: when tells the time it happened. Cause pair: The window was open, so the room was cold — so joins what happened to its result.

Ask: In I put on my coat when it rained, which word shows time? (when, it tells when we put the coat on) · In We stayed inside because it rained, which part is the reason? (because it rained, because shows the cause) · Is then like when? What does then do? (then shows order, it is an adverb that tells what happens next)

Check understanding: Mini-whiteboards: write when or because to finish We hurried ___ we were late. Show boards together; remodel with a new pair if many choose when.

Support: Give a two-choice word bank with when and because and read both options aloud. **Stretch:** Ask pupils to change the cause sentence to start with Because and say what changes.

Use: Slides 4-6, Video clip 1 (0:00–2:32)

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20–35 min **Main activity** 15 min · Pairs

To use when, before, after and while to show time in longer sentences.

YOU DO

1. Give each pair sentence strips, time word cards with when, before, after, while, and glue sticks.
2. Model matching: pick I cleaned my teeth and I woke up, test before and after, pick the sensible time link.
3. Send pairs to make and glue three joined sentences and underline each time word.
4. Stop halfway, read two good pairs aloud and fix one muddled order together.

STUDENTS DO

1. Match two clauses with when, before, after or while to make one sentence.
2. Glue three joined sentences and underline the time word.
3. Read sentences to partner and check the time order makes sense.

Say: Pick two short ideas and one time word. Read your new long sentence to check it makes sense. Glue three super sentences and underline the time word in each one.

Worked example: Strips: I cleaned my teeth. I woke up. Try: I cleaned my teeth before I woke up — silly. Fix: I cleaned my teeth after I woke up — sensible. Underline after, which shows time [2].

Ask: We played outside ___ it rained. Which time word fits? (before or when we played, or after it stopped; must show sensible time) · How do you know after shows time here? (it tells when one action happened compared to the other)

Check understanding: Pairs hold up one glued sentence; teacher scans underlining of when, before, after, while. If order is muddled, model again with pictures and let them remake one.

Support: Give a word bank with when, before, after, while and two picture clauses to choose from, as extending sentences with a wider range of conjunctions is expected in Year 3 [2]. **Stretch:** Add a second time linker to grow the same idea into two sentences.

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35–50 min **Practice** 15 min · On their own

To choose time and cause words and justify the choice in writing.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 9 word lists: time words when, before, then, during and cause words because, so, therefore.
2. Model one Worksheet Task A item: read both ideas, try two words, pick and say why it fits.
3. Give out Task A for pupils to complete on their own with pencils.
4. Stop for two pupils to read a joined sentence and explain time or cause.

STUDENTS DO

1. Read each pair in Task A and choose the best joining word.
2. Write the joined sentence and add a short because it shows time or cause note.
3. Share one answer with a partner and agree or improve it.

Say: Conjunctions join ideas and help writing flow [4]. Adverbs like then and therefore can make the link of time or cause clear [1][2]. Prepositions like during sit before a thing, as in during the film [1][2]. Choose the word, join the ideas, then say why it fits.

Worked example: Ideas: It was late. We hurried. Try when: It was late when we hurried — not clear. Try so: It was late, so we hurried — good, so shows result. Try therefore: It was late, therefore we hurried — good, therefore is an adverb that shows cause [2].

Ask: We stayed inside ___ it rained. Which word and why? (because, it gives the reason why we stayed inside) · First the alarm rings. ___ we get dressed. Which adverb fits? (then or next, it shows order in time)

Check understanding: Collect Task A and scan first three joins; if because and so are swapped, show the cause chain on the board and do one more together.

Support: Give sentence frames with so already in place and two result options to choose, plus a small bank with then, during, because. **Stretch:** Rewrite a so sentence with therefore and explain what stayed the same.

Use: Slide 9, Worksheet Task A

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50–60 min **Plenary** 10 min · Whole class

To check pupils can tell time words from cause words.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 10 and read the big idea together.
2. Show Slide 11 and do think, pair, share on How does because change We stayed inside?
3. Show Slide 12 true or false and vote with fingers.
4. Link back to success lines and praise clear time and cause sentences.

STUDENTS DO

1. Chant the big idea and sort called words into time or cause.
2. Think, pair, share how because changes We stayed inside.
3. Vote true or false and correct the false ones aloud.

Say: Time words tell when it happened, cause words tell why it happened. A main clause can stand alone as a sentence, a subordinate clause cannot be a complete sentence on its own [3]. When can start the sentence too [3]. Say your sentence both ways and check it still makes sense.

Worked example: We put on coats when it rained. Flip: When it rained, we put on coats. Both work because when joins the time idea to the main idea [3].

Ask: Because shows the cause or reason. True or false? (True, it explains why something happened) · Then is a conjunction that joins clauses. True or false? (False, then is an adverb that shows order [2]) · During the morning is time. What kind of word is during? (a preposition, it sits before a thing to show time [1][2])

Check understanding: Slide 12 votes plus exit lines on boards; if then is still called a conjunction, reteach with then versus when sentence pair tomorrow starter.

Support: Offer sentence starter We stayed inside because ___ with two picture reasons to pick. **Stretch:** Explain to a partner what changes after because of compared to because.

Use: Slides 10-12

Common mistakes

Mistake	How to spot it	How to fix it
Calling then a joining conjunction	Pupil writes First we ran then we hid and says then joined the clauses	Show then is an adverb that shows order, not a conjunction [2]; use and or when to join, keep then to order: First we ran and then we hid
Using because of before a full clause with a verb	Pupil writes We stopped the game because of it rained	Remind because joins a clause with a verb, because of sits before a thing [2][1]: because it rained or because of the rain
Picking a time word for a cause link	Pupil writes We hurried when we were late to mean why	Ask when or why: if it answers why, use because or so to express cause [2]; keep when, before, after, while for time [2]

Support

- Give word banks with when, before, after, while and picture clauses to choose from
- Give sentence frames with because or so already in place and two sensible endings to pick
- Limit preposition sort to during and after with pictures before adding in and before

Stretch

- Add a second time linker to grow the same idea into two sentences
- Turn a so sentence round into a because sentence with the same meaning
- Write one new pair showing both uses of after: after lunch and after we eat

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For the LSE or teaching assistant

Stay with the support table in main and practice: read strips aloud, point to the verb to check time order, and scribe the justification in Task A if needed.

Check for understanding

Question	Answer
Pick the time word: We waved ___ the bus left.	when / before / after — any sensible time link, e.g. when the bus left
Pick the cause word: It was cold, ___ we wore coats.	so, it shows result; therefore also correct as adverb
Is during in during lunch a conjunction or preposition?	preposition, it sits before a thing to show time [1][2]

Homework

At home write one when sentence and one because sentence about your evening.

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