

# 10

# Understanding coherence and cohesion

## Adult education

UNIT AIMS

**Skill:** understanding coherence and cohesion

**Vocabulary:** education topic vocabulary

**Exam practice:** First Paper 1 Part 2

### Improve your Use of English skills: understanding coherence and cohesion

#### What is coherence and cohesion?

*Coherence is the way in which ideas in a text are linked logically. Cohesion is the way in which different parts of a text refer to each other (linking devices, pronouns, etc). Understanding coherence and cohesion involves recognising how the ideas in a text are linked and how those links are expressed through the words chosen.*

- 1 What are pronouns an example of?
- A the way parts of a text refer to each other
  - B something that is very expressive
  - C words that writers choose without thinking

#### Why is understanding coherence and cohesion important?

*It's an important part of understanding a text as a whole. Analysing how different parts of the text are related to each other helps you understand the functions of different words and phrases. Some exam tasks test this, meaning that you need to think about more than just the exact point in a text where an exam item, such as a missing word, appears. This might be to decide whether an answer should be negative or positive, or, for example, if it should be a pronoun or an article.*

- 2 When choosing a word to complete a sentence in an exam task,
- A other parts of the text are usually irrelevant.
  - B the words on either side of the gap always give you the answer.
  - C you may need to consider other parts of the text.

#### How do you understand coherence and cohesion?

*When doing an exam task based on a text (e.g. First Paper 1 Part 2) read it for gist first to understand the general meaning. Look at each question in turn. Consider whether the meaning of the text as a whole suggests that a negative or a positive word is required. Ask yourself if a pronoun or other linking word is required, based on the way the ideas are connected. Think about the logic of the text as a whole, as well as the meaning at the point where each question appears.*

- 3 Understanding the gist of a text in an exam task can help you choose
- A whether to answer a question or not.
  - B between a positive or a negative form of a word.
  - C what questions to ask yourself about the text.

#### How is it important in First?

*In Part 1, it can help you choose the correct answer when the missing word is a linking device (however, moreover, etc). In Part 2, it can help in the same way. It can also help you decide when a negative word is required or when a pronoun, article, etc is required. In Part 3, it can help you decide between negative and positive derivatives.*

- 4 In Part 2, understanding coherence and cohesion will tell you
- A which questions have the same answers as each other.
  - B when you can be certain you have the right answer.
  - C when the answer is a word such as 'not' or 'no'.

### Get started

Look at the photo and answer the questions.

- Do you think it is a good idea for older people to return to education? Why do they do it?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of studying when you're older? Add some ideas to the table below.

#### Adult education

Advantages	Disadvantages
Mature students can offer advice and experience to younger students.	A long break from studying might make it harder to get back into education.



### Develop your vocabulary

1 Choose the correct word.

- 1 Universities are usually happy to welcome a percentage of **senior / mature** students.
- 2 He's had an unusual career **road / path** from market trader to company owner.
- 3 Most people aim for the best qualifications they can get in their chosen **field / territory**.
- 4 For many people, education is about **heightening / broadening** their knowledge, not getting a better job.
- 5 **Further / Distance** learning means you don't need to be physically present at a college.
- 6 Just make sure your degree is officially **recognised / known** by the government.
- 7 Open University students' essays are usually **assessed / criticised** by an online tutor.
- 8 In recent years, universities have started charging **scholarship / tuition** fees.

2 Write a word from the box in each gap.

audiovisual ■ certificate ■ deadline ■ requirements ■ submitted

Dear Ms Stevenson,

Thank you for your enquiry. In answer to your questions, firstly, there are no entry (1) \_\_\_\_\_ for our courses. Secondly, your assignments and course material are often made available online, but in some cases they will be sent directly to you. Once you enrol on one of our courses, we would expect you to send your work directly to the course tutor on or before the (2) \_\_\_\_\_ set. Typically, essays are set once a week, though this may vary depending on the course. The work you have (3) \_\_\_\_\_ is then marked and sent back to you, usually within seven working days.

I would like to point out that all of our courses make use of (4) \_\_\_\_\_ material, both on the internet and through the medium of television and DVDs.

Finally, on completion of the course, your (5) \_\_\_\_\_ will be sent to you by post.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

George Hayling  
Director of Studies

**Develop your Use of English skills: understanding coherence and cohesion**

**1** Choose the correct word or phrase.

- 1 Many students cannot get a place on a regular degree course. **Because of / Despite** this, home-based study and distance learning are more popular than ever.
- 2 Most courses offer some form of certificate at the end **and / but** that does not mean that the qualifications will be useful.
- 3 At the end of your course, you will want to have useful qualifications. **Every / No** student wants to believe that their studies were a waste of time.
- 4 The expense prevents some adults from returning to education. **Another / This** reason is family commitments.
- 5 Learning a trade when you're older can improve job prospects. In **addition / general**, it gives people a sense of achievement.
- 6 Younger students often need guidance regarding their studies. **Therefore / Similarly**, adults also have problems that need addressing.

**2** Complete the table. Add more words or phrases to each category.

also ■ and ■ as a result ■ because (of) ■ but ■ despite ■ even though  
 ■ for example ■ furthermore ■ however ■ in addition ■ so ■ such as ■ therefore

Linking words and phrases ...	Linking words and phrases ...
to show contrast	to show reason or result
to show addition	to introduce an example

**3** Write one word from exercise 2 in each gap to complete the texts.

Some people disapprove of the number of mature students. I think it's a positive thing, (1) \_\_\_\_\_, and I think they have a lot to offer. My university experience is a lot richer (2) \_\_\_\_\_ of some of the older friends I've made. I think it's wonderful that people can study when they're older, (3) \_\_\_\_\_ though they might have been away from education for a long time. One friend, who's in his forties, had always wanted to study philosophy, (4) \_\_\_\_\_ he sold his business to pay for the course!

Joanna, **21**

I wasn't expecting the college to be so encouraging, to be honest. For (5) \_\_\_\_\_, they were very encouraging (6) \_\_\_\_\_ my lack of qualifications. They were (7) \_\_\_\_\_ very flexible about family commitments, which helped a lot. (8) \_\_\_\_\_, studying alongside young people really helped me. As a (9) \_\_\_\_\_, I completed my studies with no problems (10) \_\_\_\_\_ now, in my forties, I've got a degree. Amazing!

Ben, **41**

- 4 Tick the sentence which follows logically from the first sentence.
- 1 *Subjects such as philosophy and sociology are popular choices at degree level.*
    - a Nevertheless, these subjects do not lead directly to a job.
    - b In addition, it is difficult to find work with a degree in either of these.
  - 2 *Studying when you're older should not be a problem.*
    - a In fact, some say that the additional experience older people have is a plus.
    - b Despite this, there are many benefits to being a mature student.
  - 3 *Colleges recognise that not everyone can physically attend a course of study.*
    - a For instance, online courses are now very popular.
    - b For this reason, many now offer study-at-home courses.
  - 4 *Going back to studying after a long gap can be problematic.*
    - a As a result, people can greatly improve their job prospects.
    - b Mature students often have family commitments as well as academic difficulties.
  - 5 *Educational programmes on the radio are not considered to have been a great success.*
    - a As well as that, they gave ordinary people the chance to broaden their knowledge.
    - b In spite of this, thousands of people took advantage of the programmes.
  - 6 *Distance learning has been greatly helped by the internet.*
    - a Due to its popularity, television soon became a popular medium for education.
    - b Advantages such as real-time communication make it much more effective than using the radio, television or the postal service.

- 5 Read the text and put the events below in the order they happened.

I enrolled on a distance learning course, mainly because I felt that I'd wasted my education. I left school having passed only two of my GCSEs. Despite that poor performance, I managed to resit the exams and get a place in an agricultural college. However, I dropped out after the first term because I hadn't been doing any work. After that, working in a factory seemed, at first, to be a good option. I had my own money and some good friends. I was happy, or so I thought. But this idea kept nagging at me that I could do better. I would spend my evenings reading and one day I just thought, 'I need to get qualified.' Studying at home was perfect because I didn't need to give up my job. It was hard work being a student and holding down a full-time job, but it got me where I wanted to go – to university ... finally. I gained my degree almost exactly twenty years after I'd first left school. A little late, but never mind!

**The writer**

- 1  a took a distance learning course.
- 2  b graduated from university.
- 3  c failed most of his GCSEs.
- 4  d worked in industry.
- 5  e went to agricultural college.

## 6 Decide what each word in bold refers to.

- 1 The college offers distance learning courses leading to diplomas in a wide range of subjects. However, students should be aware that **these** are not recognised qualifications.
  - a the courses
  - b the diplomas
  - c the students
- 2 Among the readers of **his** book *Martin Eden*, there is more than one who has had similar experiences to those Jack London describes.
  - a Jack London
  - b Martin Eden
  - c one reader
- 3 From the whole course, Finn singled out the meeting with Garrard as the turning point in his career. **That** was what made him decide to be a doctor.
  - a the whole course
  - b the meeting with Garrard
  - c the decision to be a doctor
- 4 When **she** describes her mother as 'old, desperate and saddened', Rose wants to provoke a response from the female reader.
  - a Rose
  - b Rose's mother
  - c the female reader
- 5 Students encouraged to enrol on courses by doubtful individuals posing as academics are often bitterly disappointed. **They** soon find that the course of study is not well coordinated.
  - a students
  - b doubtful individuals
  - c academics
- 6 The subject studied by a student who fails to get qualifications is irrelevant. The outcome is not a matter of what you choose, but of how suitable **it** is for you.
  - a the failure to get qualifications
  - b the suitability of a subject
  - c the subject

## 7 Choose the correct word.

One of (1) **some / the** main reasons people choose adult education is to give themselves better job prospects. Although they are happy enough in their career, (2) **it / which** can mean that they get a better job in the same field.

(3) **In / On** contrast, some people choose to leave their chosen field (4) **so / and** retrain in something completely different. These people sometimes feel that they have followed a career path (5) **it / that** doesn't suit them, or that they are (6) **very / not** satisfied with their jobs. Another group of people study later in life because they feel they missed an opportunity (7) **when / once** they were younger.

But there are others who do it just (8) **because / how** they want to. They simply ask 'Why not?' and go back to studying for the pleasure learning gives them. Once back in education, many mature students report that they have a renewed passion (9) **in / for** it. Many educators also say that they (10) **not / no** longer take education for granted the way some younger students do.

8 Read the text ignoring the gaps and answer the questions.

- 1 Does the first sentence clearly introduce what follows? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Is the writer positive, negative or mixed in his views about being a mature student? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Is the word in gap 2 likely to be a verb or an article? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Is the word in gap 3 likely to be a regular verb or a modal verb? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 After gap 4, does the writer add a similar argument or a contrasting argument? \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Where does the writer provide examples of how to prepare for a course? \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 After gap 6, how does the writer change the subject? \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 Would you expect the word missing from gap 7 to be positive or negative? \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 Does the missing word in gap 8 refer to a person or an action? \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 After gap 10, does the writer mention one or two aspects of adult education? \_\_\_\_\_

## HOW CAN I BEST PREPARE MYSELF AS A MATURE STUDENT?

There are plenty of things you can and should do to prepare for a return to education. If you follow (1) \_\_\_\_\_ advice, it will mean that you are able to make the most of your time as a student and get (2) \_\_\_\_\_ best possible results.

One of the things you (3) \_\_\_\_\_ do is to read as much as possible about the subject you are going to study. Then, it pays to learn some basic skills like how to quickly find useful information on the internet. In (4) \_\_\_\_\_, you will need to learn or brush up on skills such as how to take notes, revise for exams and express yourself (5) \_\_\_\_\_ in writing. There's plenty of help available on the internet and in books on study skills.

(6) \_\_\_\_\_, there may be some things that you haven't thought of. Becoming a full-time student is a major lifestyle change and it will affect your relationships with family and friends, but (7) \_\_\_\_\_ always in a good way. If you move to a different town, for example, (8) \_\_\_\_\_ may not be practical to continue with some relationships. Another problem could be that you will change, perhaps because you will be exposed to new ideas, (9) \_\_\_\_\_ could mean that you drift apart from some of your friends. So, as (10) \_\_\_\_\_ as the academic side of things, give a little thought to how (11) \_\_\_\_\_ personal circumstances might change. At least then you will know (12) \_\_\_\_\_ to expect.

9 Write one word in each gap to complete the text in exercise 8.

10 Complete the sentences with ideas of your own.

- 1 Going to college or university can be stressful. For this reason, \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 I had some difficulty with one of my subjects. Then I \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 The internet has many applications in education, such as \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 It's unfair to expect all students to go on to university. Not everyone \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Tuition fees now amount to many thousands of pounds. Consequently, \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 People who study as adults tend to have a good idea of what they want to achieve, in contrast to school students, who \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 Many colleges now offer courses which \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 Studying can put a big strain on you, especially when \_\_\_\_\_

*Exam focus:*understanding coherence and cohesion in *First*

1 Look at the exam practice task on page 85 and answer the questions about the text.

1 What is the main point of each paragraph?

Paragraph 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Paragraph 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Paragraph 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Paragraph 4: \_\_\_\_\_

2 Is the text written in basic chronological order? Which words/phrases help you?

\_\_\_\_\_

2 Look at the exam practice task again and underline the point where the writer does each of these things.

1 He/she begins to talk about media.

2 He/she begins to talk about negative aspects of radio.

3 He/she refers to the advantages of radio for a second time.

4 He/she mentions television being replaced.

5 He/she starts talking about the present.

3 Look at the exam practice task again and note down which gaps probably contain these things.

1 a negative word \_\_\_\_\_

2 a (modal) verb referring to the past \_\_\_\_\_

3 a pronoun \_\_\_\_\_

4 a linking word that introduces an example \_\_\_\_\_

5 a linking word related to passing time \_\_\_\_\_

6 linking words that show contrast \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

4 Tick the things that understanding coherence and cohesion will help you do in the different parts of *First* Paper 1.

1 recognise when the writer changes the subject \_\_\_\_\_

2 understand the chronology of a text \_\_\_\_\_

3 follow the writer's logic \_\_\_\_\_

4 identify whether the meaning is positive or negative \_\_\_\_\_

5 focus on linking words with different meanings, such as *or*, *and*, or *but* \_\_\_\_\_

**Skills tip**

In *First* Paper 1 Part 2, should you

a assume that the text will be written in chronological order?

Yes / No

b follow the writer's logic by looking at the content of each paragraph?

Yes / No

*Exam practice:***First Paper 1 Part 2**

For questions 1–8, read the text below and think of a word which best fits each gap. Use only one word in each gap. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Write your answers in CAPITAL LETTERS.

*Example:*

0    O    N

## DISTANCE *Learning*

As long ago as the 1800s, students could enrol (0) \_\_\_\_\_ a course of study and submit their work by post to be assessed. Their instructor (1) \_\_\_\_\_ then send back the marked work, together with the next assignment.

(2) \_\_\_\_\_ radio became popular, educators hoped it was the start of a new era. Some excellent programmes were made and they were well-liked, (3) \_\_\_\_\_ there was a lack of course material which meant that methodical study was not practical.

(4) \_\_\_\_\_ the limitations of radio, it helped provide a framework for what was to follow. Television made possible courses such (5) \_\_\_\_\_ those offered by the Open University. (6) \_\_\_\_\_ courses offered recognised full degrees and students watched television programmes, which made maximum use of the visual medium alongside printed material sent by post. It wasn't until the development of the internet, (7) \_\_\_\_\_, that the availability of audiovisual and text-based materials could be combined into one medium.

(8) \_\_\_\_\_ everyone can physically attend college or university, so the many online courses available today present a unique opportunity.

### Skills tip

Understanding coherence and cohesion is very important in *First Paper 1 Part 2*. It is a good idea to read the whole text for gist before filling in any of the gaps. This will help you identify whether a missing word is positive or negative, for example. It will also help you recognise the chronology of the text and where the writer moves on to a different subject.