

But / However

But is more informal than **however**. You can use **however** at the beginning of a sentence, but you can't use **but** at the beginning of a sentence (in written English). You should not use **however** after a comma: either start a new sentence or use a semi-colon.

- I tried to lift the box, **but** it was too heavy for me.
- I tried to lift the box; **however**, it was too heavy for me.

Although / Even though

These linking words are the same, and they are both followed by a **subject + verb**.

- **Although** I exercise every day, I can't seem to lose any weight.
- She still loves him, **even though** he treated her very badly.

Despite / In spite of

These linking words are the same, and they are followed by a **noun** or a **gerund** (-ing form of the verb, which can function as a noun).

- Our plane arrived on time **in spite of** the delay during takeoff.
- We won the game **despite** having two fewer players.

Despite the fact that / in spite of the fact that

These phrases are followed by a **subject + verb**.

- Our plane arrived on time **in spite of the fact that** it left 30 minutes late.
- We won the game **despite the fact that** we had two fewer players.

While / Whereas / Unlike

These linking words are used to make contrasts. **While** and **whereas** are usually used between two complete phrases. **Unlike** is typically used with only a subject.

- I like tennis, **while** my brother prefers bowling.
- This mobile plan costs £0.05 per minute, **whereas** that one gives you up to 800 minutes per month for a fixed price.
- His boss allows him to work from home, **unlike** mine.
- She's very friendly, **unlike** her sister.

While and **whereas** can also be used in a similar way to **although**, when contrasting two things:

- **Whereas** the purpose of Text 1 is to inform, Text 3 is more persuasive.

Linking Words Quiz: Contrasting Ideas

1. We called her five times, _____ she didn't pick up the phone.

- a) but b) whereas c) in spite of

2. I really liked the movie _____ it got bad reviews.

- a) however b) even though c) whereas

3. He followed his dream of being an actor _____ his parents wanted him to be an engineer.

- a) in spite of b) however c) despite the fact that

4. The disease is spreading _____ efforts to control it.

- a) but b) whereas c) in spite of

5. New York City has a lot of interesting cultural events, _____ my hometown.

- a) also b) unlike c) although

6. An intensive course is a great way to learn a language fast, _____ it can be very tiring at times.

- a) although b) despite c) unlike

7. _____ *Base Details* is critical of the war, *Who's for the Game?* is very patriotic.

- a) in spite of b) whereas c) unlike

8. _____ I understand your point of view, I still don't agree with you.

- a) while b) however c) in spite of

9. We went out the rain.

- a) in spite of b) however c) although

10. She went on working being exhausted.

- a) although b) despite c) whereas

11. everyone seems to think she's wonderful, I don't quite trust her.

- a) whereas b) despite c) however

12. I didn't like the film., everybody else seemed to enjoy it.

- a) however b) despite c) unlike

13. Text 1, Text 3 uses a lot of figurative language.

- a) although b) unlike c) however

14. We managed to do it he wasn't there.

- a) however b) although c) either could be used here