

# Suzanne's Quick Tips

Episode #7: Discourse markers



**Culips English Podcast**

# Transcript

Hey guys, this is Suzanne, and you're listening to Culips. Today, we're bringing you another Quick Tip episode, and remember, that's where we talk about a quick and easy thing that you can quickly apply to your everyday English practice. And we're going to be talking about discourse markers.

All right, but before we do, I want to remind you that one of the best ways to study English, is to study with Culips. And the best way to study with Culips, is to go to [culips.com](https://culips.com) and download our study guide for this episode.

All right, let's jump right in. So what is a discourse marker? Well, a discourse marker, or discourse markers are those little words like, **first**, **second**, **third**, **however**, or **finally** that helped us to clarify or categorize our thoughts. They're really commonly used in writing. But most people don't realize they really should also use them in their speaking of English. This helps us to put our thoughts into spaces for us and for the listener. It helps the listener to kind of have a clue about what we're going to say.

So for example - Ha! Do you get that? I just used it there. For example, instead of just blurting out everything that you're going to cover in a class lesson, right? So maybe you're a TA (teacher's assistant) or an RA (research assistant) or you're helping your teacher. Or maybe you're a professor yourself. It's helpful for the teacher to put all the elements in a clear order by using discourse markers. The teacher might say, "First, we're going to look at this today. Second, we're going to cover this subject. And third, or finally, we're going to look at this." In this sense, we know clearly that there are three different things that will be covered in the class, and we know which order they will be presented. That totally helps us create space in our notes, and in our minds as students to receive that information.

Here are some examples of discourse markers: **for example**, **understandably**, **for instance**, **additionally**, **however**, **unfortunately**, **honestly**, or **truthfully**. We might say,

"Honestly, I don't want to drive all of those miles just to stay for one day." Or, "Truthfully, I really don't like the painting, but I'm proud of her effort." These are easily thrown into our conversational English as they help us tell the listener that we are opening up about something or offering an honest opinion. These are probably the easiest ones for you to use in your everyday speech. Try using honestly or truthfully in your everyday speech and see how it works.

And next time you're working on a presentation or something more formal, try using **first**, **second**, **third**, **finally**, and **for example**, when putting your speech together.

That's all for us today. Remember to let us know what you think. Find us on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. And if you have any questions contact us at [contact@culips](mailto:contact@culips). Talk to you guys soon. Bye!

## Quick Tip Takeaways

1. Discourse markers are words or phrases, usually at the beginning of a sentence, that help us organize and categorize our thoughts.
2. Discourse markers are used in written English, as well as in spoken English.
3. Discourse markers help the listener to follow your story in a more organized way.

# Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever used discourse markers when speaking English formally? Like when making a presentation, proposal, or speech? How about in your everyday conversations? If so, which ones do you usually use?
2. Have you ever noticed your teacher or boss use discourse markers? If so, which ones have you heard them use? In which context did they use them? Did you find them helpful? Did they help you to organize your ideas or your note taking?
3. In your first language, do you have something similar to English discourse markers? If so, which ones are there? In what context are they usually used?

## Study Challenges

Think of a funny story that you love to tell. Write it down quickly on by hand or on your computer in English.

Read through it, and see if you can add some discourse markers throughout. Try using: **first, second, third, finally, then, and in other words.**

Read it out loud and see if this helps your story! For an added bonus, read it out loud to a friend and see if it helps them to clearly understand your story. Using discourse markers is a great way to organize your English writing and speaking and make yourself be understood by others.

# Credits

Music: If by Broke for Free; Things to Come by Broke for free

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