

Transitions

Transitions are words or phrases that show relationships between ideas. Transitions, sometimes called signal words, give the reader a clue about what comes next in a passage. Using transitions in your own writing will make your ideas flow from one to another.

Learn about the many different types of transitions.

Signal Time or Sequence



Words such as: first, second, finally, last, next, afterward, after, earlier, during, while, before, then, previously, now, until, etc.

- **Example:** *Previously*, I studied Spanish, but *now* I'm taking French.

Signal Additional Information



Words and phrases such as: in addition, furthermore, moreover, and, also, another, etc.

- **Example:** My teacher Mrs. Jenkins is doing an excellent job. *Furthermore*, she deserves to get a raise.

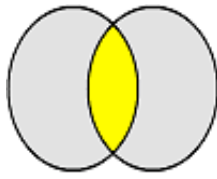
Signal Examples or Illustrations



Words such as: for example, for instance, to illustrate, such as, including, etc.

- **Example:** There are many kinds of snacks to eat that are healthy for you. *For example*, an orange would be a healthy snack because it has vitamins and fiber.

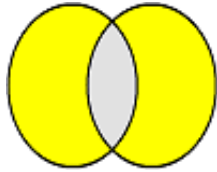
Signal Comparison



Words and phrases such as: likewise, similarly, in the same manner, just as, as well, etc.

- **Example:** Jerry plays the electric guitar in his friend's band. *Similarly*, his sister Gina plays the keyboard in her friend's band.

Signal Contrast



Words and phrases such as: however, although, but, yet, nevertheless, whereas, in contrast, on the contrary, on the other hand, instead, etc.

- **Example:** Our town had severe weather this week, including thunderstorms and tornado watches. *However*, we have clear sunny skies in our forecast for next week.

Signal Cause and Effect



Words and phrases such as: as a result, consequently, thus, therefore, because, accordingly, since, so, etc.

- **Example:** Mrs. Kelly was bitten by a dog when she was a little girl. *Therefore*, as an adult, she's afraid of dogs.

Signal Endings or Closings



Words and phrases such as: in conclusion, all in all, in brief, in summary, as indicated above, etc.

- **Example:** *In conclusion*, every student in our school could greatly benefit from our new arts program.

Sample Questions

1. What would be the **best** transition word or phrase to connect the ideas in this sentence?

I have an English paper that is due next week; _____ , I need to do some research at the library.

- A. whereas
- B. therefore
- C. for example
- D. previously

Explanation: The **best** answer choice is "therefore" because it is a transition word that signals cause and effect. In this example, the speaker needs to go to the library to research (**effect**) because he or she has an English paper due soon (**cause**).

2. In the following sentence, what does the transition phrase "in the same manner" signal?

Katrina studied hard in college and later became a lawyer; in the same manner, her cousin Martin made excellent grades in school and became a doctor.

- A. closing
- B. illustration
- C. comparison
- D. time

Explanation: In this example, the phrase "in the same manner" signals comparison. The speaker is comparing Martin's college experiences and career with Katrina's.

Go with the Flow

Knowing when to use a transition and which one to use is important. If using a transition makes your paper sound too choppy, you're probably using the wrong one. Try different transitions until the sentences flow together smoothly.

