Transitions

Transitions connect what was just read to what is about to be read. These devices can exist at both the sentence level and the paragraph level.

Sentence level transitions connect sentences together and make your writing less choppy.

- Choppy sentences:

  Students in the English class enjoy reading Shakespeare. They find his writing to be highly stylistic and creative. They enjoy reading Milton.

- Sentence with transitions:

  Students in the English class enjoy reading Shakespeare because they find his writing to be highly stylistic and creative. In addition, they also enjoy reading Milton.

Paragraph level transitions connect paragraphs together to make the ideas from one paragraph logically connect to the next paragraph.

- If paragraph one is about how studying for class helps student make good grades, and paragraph two is about how sleep encourages good grades, a transition sentence between the two ideas could be:

  While preparing for class can help you make good grades, getting enough sleep is also important.

  This sentence combines the topics of each paragraph into one sentence, thereby making the ideas flow smoothly together.

Transitional terms:

Addition: and, also, in addition to, additionally, next, further, furthermore, besides, again, and, as well, equally important, moreover, then

Example: for example, in fact, for instance, specifically, to illustrate

Comparison: also, similarly, likewise, in the same way, just as

Contrast: but, however, on the other hand, although, even though, while, yet, on the contrary, in contrast, in spite of

Summary or Conclusion: therefore, in conclusion, in other words, finally, thus, in the end, in sum, to summarize
Time: after, before, next, during, finally, meanwhile, then, immediately, simultaneously, subsequently

Logical Relationship: if, so, therefore, consequently, thus, since, as a result

Emphasis: indeed, in fact, of course

This handout is adapted from the University of Alabama Writing Center Website. Only the format has been changed.