
TRANSITIONS FOR COHESION

WHAT DO TRANSITIONS DO?

Transitions explain the relationship between what has been said and what will be said. They link together parts of sentences, whole sentences, paragraphs, and even sections of an essay, and can take the form of a word, a phrase, a sentence, or even a paragraph. Good transitions provide readers with a clearly marked pathway through your argument and are essential to the coherence of paragraphs and essays.

GREETINGS AND GOODBYES

The most complex transitions that writers must write come at the beginning and end of a piece of writing.

An effective **introduction** takes the reader's mind from wherever it happens to be and persuades them to set out through your writing. It serves as the doorway into a piece of writing, through which the reader is drawn in and their interest is sparked. To accomplish this, it is important that an introduction give the reader a sense of what to expect. While reading, readers continuously make predictions about what might come next, and if you help them out in this regard, you will build up their expectations and increase their level of engagement with your writing. If you don't let them in on your plan, they are likely to have a more difficult time following what you've written or simply lose interest.

An effective **conclusion** describes where the writing has led. It helps the reader to make a transition from the argument you've presented back out to what they should do with this new information.

INTERNAL COHERENCE

The smaller transitions that occur within sentences and paragraphs are somewhat easier to explain in concrete terms. They help you indicate to the reader where to focus their attention next by defining the relationship between what they just read and what they will be reading in a moment. Common transitional words and phrases include:

- **Addition and sequence:** *again, also, besides, even more important, first, in the first case, furthermore, in addition, likewise, moreover, next, second, then, third, last, finally, etc.*
- **Cause and effect:** *accordingly, as a result, because, consequently, for, for this reason, hence, so, then, therefore, thus, to this end, etc.*
- **Comparison:** *also, in the same way, likewise, similarly, etc.*
- **Concession:** *admittedly, although, even though, granted that, it is true, of course, etc.*
- **Contrast:** *although, at the same time, but, conversely, even so, however, on the other hand, in contrast, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, on the contrary, otherwise, still, yet, etc.*
- **Example:** *for example, for instance, in fact, indeed, of course, specifically, to illustrate, etc.*
- **Purpose:** *for this purpose, for this reason, to this end, etc.*
- **Place:** *above, adjacent to, below, beyond, farther on, here, nearby, etc.*
- **Summary or conclusion:** *consequently, in any event, in brief, in other words, in short, on the whole, that is, therefore, etc.*
- **Time:** *after, afterward, at length, immediately, in the meantime, in the past, later, meanwhile, now, since, soon, then, while, etc.*