

TRANSITIONS

Transitions can help a person's writing flow logically and smoothly from one topic to another. By using proper transitions, the writer provides a bridge that points back to the last idea and forward to the next idea at the same time. Consequently, transitions help to create unified paragraphs (and essays) that might otherwise seem confusing and unrelated.

Without transitions between paragraphs and within sentences, one's writing seems choppy and disconnected. The reader might not understand the logical connection between ideas if the writer does not fill in the gaps when moving from one idea to the next. Having too few transitions makes a piece difficult to read and understand.

In your writing, you should always try to guide the reader smoothly through your information without making him work to discover the connection between two points. Familiarize yourself with the following transitions and their uses.

USEFUL TRANSITIONAL DEVICES OR WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

Words to use to show:

Addition

also	equally important	as well	over and above that	and besides
additionally	further	beyond that	finally	too
again	on top of that	next	and	what is more
in addition	moreover	now		

Sequence/Order

first	and so forth	last	afterward
second	next	finally	previously
third	then	after	

Time relationships:

first	soon after	yesterday	briefly	in the meantime
second	afterward	today	by degrees	instantaneously
third	later	tomorrow	finally	promptly
and so forth	after a few days	eventually	gradually	suddenly
meanwhile	after a while	at length	in the future	now
soon	immediately	at once	in a short time	

Place/Position:

adjacent to	below	to the right	close at hand	next to
above	under	parallel to	in the background	outside
across	on the opposite side	at this point	in the foreground	within
beyond	to the left	nearby	here	

Comparison/Similarity

like	in the same way	similarly	in the same manner	in like manner
likewise	also	furthermore	likewise	equally

Contrast

however	although	for all that	otherwise	on the other hand
nevertheless	still	nonetheless	yet	at the same time
but	even so	in truth	be that as it may	although this may
be true	in other circumstances	conversely	after all	yet
even though	in contrast	in spite of that	on the contrary	

Cause/Effect

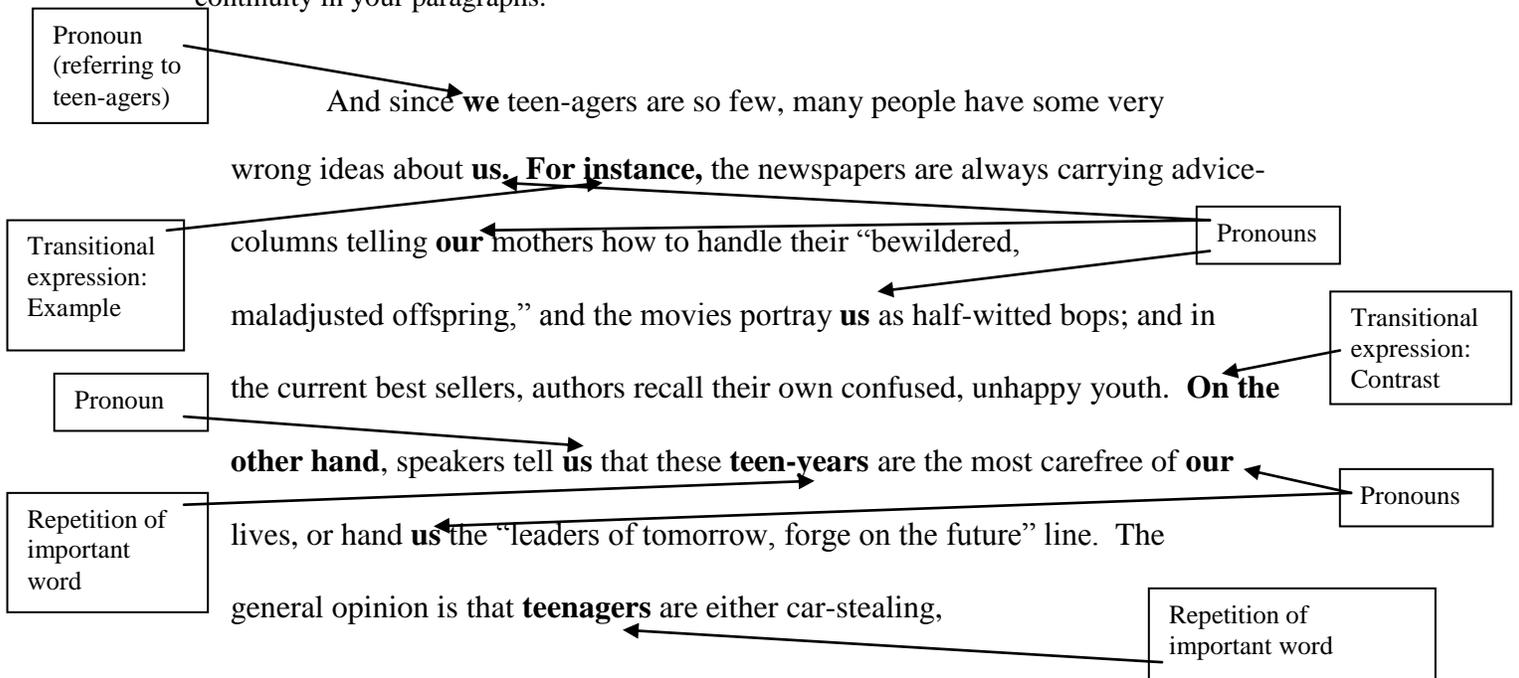
accordingly	consequently	hence	that being the case	thus
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as a consequence as a result	as it turns out for that reason	inevitably necessarily	then therefore	
Conclusion				
therefore thus consequently	accordingly as a result finally	due to certainly	to this end for these reasons	as a consequence in conclusion
Emphasis				
to repeat in fact truly surely	again indeed to this end	indeed for this purpose above all	certainly especially in any event	in particular with this in mind most important
Example				
for example for instance	a case in point as an illustration	such as that is	in other words as an example	in particular
Reservation				
admittedly even though	even so	nevertheless	regardless	despite this
Summary				
to sum up in summary this in brief in short	as I have said in conclusion therefore consequently	lastly to conclude as a result thus	finally in brief in any event in other words	as has been noted on the whole to be sure hence

(Adapted from: Royce Adams. *Think, Read, React, Plan, Write, Rewrite*. pp. 138-142).

USING TRANSITIONS

To add variety to your writing, mix your transitional devices! Combine **pronoun reference**, **repetition of important words**, and **transitional expressions** to achieve the most effective continuity in your paragraphs.



dope-taking delinquents, or immature, weepy adolescents with nothing on

our minds but boys (or girls as the case may be). Most adults have one of

Repetition of important word

Pronoun

two attitudes toward the handling of **teens** some say that only a sound beating

will keep **us** in line; others treat **us** as mentally unbalanced creatures on the brink of insanity,

who must be pampered and shielded at any cost.

Source: Judith D. Matz. "The New Third Age"

Don't make your reader jump from one idea to another; use your transitions to carry him or her across the gaps with transitional devices, such as pronoun reference, repetition of important words, and transitional expressions.

USING TRANSITIONAL EXPRESSIONS

Result:
Introduces
conclusion
drawn from
preceding
paragraphs

Thus, in the perspective of biology, war **first** dwindles to the status of a

rare curiosity. Further probing, **however**, makes it loom larger **again**.

Addition:
Shows how
one thing
happens
after
another

Example and
Sequence

For one thing, it is a form of intraspecific struggle, and as such may be useless

or even harmful to the species as a whole. **Then** we find that one of

Cause/Effect

the very few animal species that make war is man; and man is today not

merely the highest product of evolutionary progress. **And**, war, though it need not

Addition:
Introduces
further
explanation

Contrast:
Introduces
contrasting
conclusion

always be so harmful to the human species and its progress, indubitably is so when

conducted in the total fashion which is necessary in this technological age. **Thus** war

is not merely a human problem; it is a biological problem of the broadest scope, for

on its abolition may depend life's ability to continue the progress which it has slowly

Result:
Introduces
conclusion
drawn from
details in
this
paragraph

but steadily achieved through more than a thousand million years.

Source: Sir Julian Huxley, "War as a Biological Phenomenon"

TRANSITIONS EXERCISES

DIRECTIONS: Add the transitions necessary to make the sentences in the following paragraphs fluent and connected.

1. Mardi Gras revelers engage in all sorts of irrational behavior, hiding their identities behind colorful masks, eating and drinking to excess, and dancing wildly in the streets. Nothing seems more bizarre to me than the free-for-all that takes place during Mardi Gras parades. Revelers go to ridiculous extremes, to catch the beads, drinking cups, and doubloons tossed from passing floats. Many people actually haul a ladder, bucket, or long stick down town for catching these worthless “throws.” Some people are so desperate for the trinkets that they risk injury to get them. I saw a man fall from a ladder while reaching for a string of plastic beads. I saw the same reveler crash through a group of children, lunging for a throw.
2. The group that led the campaign against gay rights in Florida held the belief that homosexuality is immoral and that, once allowed in an area, it would lead to a breakdown of the values of a society. Homosexuality has existed throughout the past. Some of the world’s greatest geniuses have professed to be homosexuals. These men and woman have made great contributions to society. Whether one agrees that their practices were immoral or not, one must respect the contributions of women and men such as Sappho, Michelangelo, and Tchaikovsky.
3. Higher education in America has recently hit a new low. In liberal-arts colleges, the abolition of many or even all specific requirements for graduation has left students to find their own way. This is too often a closed alley. Allowed to take any courses they want, many students concentrate on just one subject or specialized skill. They graduate with narrow minds.

Please take your revised paragraphs to a verbal tutor for further suggestions or a final reading.