

A transition is a word, a few words (a phrase), or even a sentence (or two) that connects two ideas together. Just as a well-built bridge allows people to travel smoothly from their current location to their destination, a transition allows readers to effortlessly move from one idea to the next. In the yellow shaded box below, *therefore* is a bridge that communicates how sentence one is related to sentence two. Even better transitions (i.e. sophisticated transitions) subtly or seamlessly connect the “old idea” (i.e. the current location) to the “new idea” (i.e. the destination). Using the six guidelines below can help you effectively “bridge the gaps” in your writing.

I love to write about my life. **Therefore,** I think that I will enjoy Written Communication.

1. The transition must also be appropriate for writing. Most transitions that are appropriate for speaking don’t make sense in writing because the writer is not “talking.” In addition, “speechy” transitions don’t actually connect ideas together; they merely introduce a new idea or provide “filler” between thoughts.

Example of a “Speechy” Transition:

A. No writer can create perfect writing. *Let me tell you* that it’s more realistic to strive for “quality” writing.

2. Avoid over-using certain transitions; vary your “bridges” by using the transitions below (pp. 3-4).

3. While it would certainly create a smooth bridge, don’t be overly repetitive with your transitions.

Example of a Repetitive Transition:

A. No writer can create perfect writing. *Because no writer can write perfectly*, “quality” writing is a more realistic goal.

4. Without a logical connection between ideas, a bridge cannot be erected. So, the transition must make sense. When using the list on the next page, select a transition that expresses the relationship logically.

Examples of Transitions that Don’t Make Sense:

A. No writer can create perfect writing. *For instance*, it’s realistic to strive for “quality” writing.

B. It seems a lot easier to write well if I can “get into it.” *Therefore*, in fifth grade, I got to create and publish my own book, which I found easy to write.

5. When there is a clear relationship and/or logical connection between the old idea and the new idea, using a transition from the next page is all that is needed to show the relationship between the ideas.

Examples of Transitions that Show the Relationship between Two Ideas:

A. No writer can create perfect writing. *However*, it's realistic to strive for "quality" writing.

B. It seems a lot easier to write well if I can "get into it." *For example*, in fifth grade, I got to create and publish my own book, which I found easy to write.

However, the bridge will be better anchored if overused transitions, such as *and*, *also*, *next*, *finally*, *first*, *second*, and *third*, are avoided. These overused transitions don't show the relationship between two ideas nor do they connect the old with the new. They merely alert readers to the appearance of a new idea.

6. To better anchor the old with the new, a transition from the next page can be used along with additional words to create a sophisticated transition that gives readers a smoother ride across the bridge.

Examples of Strong/Sophisticated Transitions that Subtly Seamlessly Connect Ideas:

A. No writer can create perfect writing. *Since perfection is unattainable*, it's more realistic to strive for "quality" writing.

B. It seems a lot easier to write well if I can "get into it." *If I'm motivated to write, as I was in 5th grade* when I got to create and publish my own book, I found it easy to write.

These sophisticated transitions are particularly effective if they connect the last few words of the old idea with the new idea, which is the case with the two examples above.

7. The better organized your writing is, the fewer transitions that will be needed. In addition, combining sentences or omitting disruptive thoughts can create invisible transitions. These are the best transitions because readers don't even realize that there was a gap that you've already "bridged" for them.

Examples of Invisible Transitions that Seamlessly Connect Ideas:

A. Trying to create the perfect writing is less realistic than striving to create "quality" writing.

B. It seems a lot easier to write well if I can "get into it," which was the case when I was in 5th grade and created and published my own book. I felt motivated and found the writing to be easy.

List of Transitions

Transitions Showing Addition: again, besides, besides that, another, further, furthermore, not only. . . but also, on top of that, added to that, even more crucial, more importantly, even more common, even more interesting, equally, in addition, additionally, too, along with, beyond that, as well as, moreover, in the same way, while not so obvious, while not as serious, to make matters worse, next, secondly, thirdly

Transitions Showing Results: consequently, a consequence of, an effect is that, for this (that) reason, accordingly, therefore, as a result, because, because of that, since, so, so that, in this way, on account of

Transitions Showing Contrast: however, despite of, in spite of, rather than, instead of, even though, although, though, although this may be the case, in contrast, on the other hand, whereas, otherwise, regardless, on the contrary, surprisingly, in opposition to this, in disagreement with this, still, yet, not only, but, except, except for

Transitions Showing Similarity: likewise, similarly, relatedly, at the same time, as well as, equally, in the same way

Transitions Clarifying Ideas: apparently, in other words, in particular, in essence, namely, essentially, indeed, put another way, of course, surely, in short, in fact, in brief, clearly, actually, as a matter of fact, basically, without a doubt

Transitions Showing Emphasis: again, for this reason, to emphasize, above all, most importantly, more importantly, certainly, especially, in particular, not surprisingly, in fact, indeed, obviously, primarily, ultimately, of course, surely, of major importance, without a doubt, equally important, in other words

Transitions Indicating that Examples will Follow: for example, for instance, to illustrate, as an illustration, in particular, to enumerate, especially, such as, specifically, incidentally, in other words, this can be seen by . . .

Transitions Indicating the Start: to begin, to start with, at the outset, initially, the most significant, my most favorite, one of the most, of the three (or four), at the top, of the greatest importance, initially, the most crucial

Transitions Indicating the End: for these reasons, in conclusion, on the whole, to summarize, in short, in brief, all in all, finally, basically, as can be seen, in essence, so far, overall, clearly, without a doubt, ultimately, to sum up, on the whole, in other words

Transitions Expressing Location: beyond, opposite, opposite of, on the other side, near, nearby, throughout, among, beneath, behind, beside, between, under, to the left, within view

Transitions Expressing Time: then, next, finally, now, once, after, while, when, whenever, earlier, at the same time, meanwhile, afterwards, before, eventually, during, throughout, prior to, in the past, later, previously, subsequently, simultaneously, soon, as soon as, until, as long as, up to the present, at the outset

Transitions Showing Purpose: for this purpose, to do this, with this in mind, so that, to bring about, for this reason

Transitions Indicating Concession (or “giving in to an opponent”): at any rate, at least, granted, although, even though, providing that, while that may be true, of course, still, naturally, to a certain extent, to a degree, yet, however, notwithstanding, although this may be true, regardless, nevertheless, nonetheless