

Transitions

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructor: _____

Course: _____

Important Note

All the activities (5) in the DLA must be completed in their entirety before meeting with a tutor and receiving credit. Where indicated, complete your work on this sheet. If your instructor wants evidence of this completed DLA, return this form to him or her with the tutor's signature included.

Learning Outcomes

Through exercises and other independent work, this activity will help you learn different techniques to effectively transition between points within a paragraph and between paragraphs.

Activities (approximately 1 hour)

Read the information, complete the activities that follow, and be prepared to discuss your answers when you meet with a tutor.

Understanding Transitions

The function of a transition is to guide the reader from one topic to the next. Writers may choose to transition within paragraphs or between them. In fact, it is usually important to use transitions between both. Transitions offer your reader valuable information about how ideas, thoughts, and paragraphs are connected, and they serve as "road maps" to how everything is connected in a paper. Without transitions, you may confuse your reader.

Connecting Ideas within a Paragraph Using Transition Words

The following list shows some of the most common transitions used when moving from point to point *within* a paragraph. However, you can't just plop the word in. Instead, you have to punctuate it properly. Please read the following rules on how to correctly punctuate transition words:

1. If you *begin* a sentence with a transition word, place a comma after it.
 - **Of course**, Teri was not really surprised.
 - **However**, the others had simply not expected it.
2. If you place the transition word in the *middle* of your sentence, place a comma before and after the transition word.
 - Sabrina and Barbie were, **of course**, happy to be in class.
 - David, **however**, was not so sure.
 - JoJo, **on the other hand**, was already at Happy Hour.
3. If you place the transition word in the *middle of two complete sentences*, make sure to use a semi-colon, transition word, and a comma.

- Jenn won the chemistry award; **of course**, she deserved it.
- Kim wanted to go to the party; **however**, she knew she should study.

Words used to show **time**: first, meanwhile, soon, then, second, today, later, next, at, third, tomorrow, afterward, as soon as, now, next week, about, suddenly, during, until, yesterday, finally, subsequently

Words that show **location**: above, behind, by, near, throughout, across, below, down, off, to the right (or left), against, beneath, in back of, onto, under, along, beside, in front of, on top of, among, between, inside, outside, around, beyond, into, over

Words used to **compare** two things: likewise, also, in the same way, like, as, similarly

Words used to **contrast** two things: still, on the other hand, however, yet, otherwise, even though, nevertheless, in contrast, instead, otherwise

Words used to **emphasize a point**: again, especially, for this reason, to repeat, to emphasize, in fact

Words that **conclude or summarize**: finally, as a result, to sum up, in conclusion, lastly, therefore, all in all

Words used to **add information**: additionally, another, finally, moreover, again, and, for instance, next, also, along, with, for example, other, as well, besides, in addition, furthermore

Words used to **clarify**: that is, for instance, in other words

Words used to show **cause and effect**: therefore, thus, hence, as a result, consequently

Connecting Ideas within a Paragraph Using Coordinators and Subordinators

The following chart shows coordinators and common subordinators used when moving from point to point *within* a paragraph. Like transition words, you can't just plop the subordinators and coordinators in. Instead, you have to punctuate them properly. Please read the following rules on how to correctly punctuate coordinators and subordinators:

Relationship	Coordinators	Subordinators
<i>Addition</i>	and, nor	
<i>Cause/Effect</i>	so	because, since, in order that, in order for
<i>Effect/Cause</i>	for	because, since, in order that, in order for
<i>Compare</i>		as, as if, as though
<i>Contrast</i>	but, yet	although, though, even though, while, whereas
<i>Concession</i>		although, though, even though, while, whereas
<i>Alternative</i>	or	
<i>Condition</i>		if, unless, whether, until, as long as, as much as, even if
<i>Time</i>		after, before, since, until, while, when, whenever, as soon as

Using Coordinators: When using coordinators to join two sentences, always make sure to place a comma before the coordinator:

- Elaine needed someone to proofread her paper, **so** Stephanie volunteered.
- Juan has almost finished his draft, **but** Brian is still working on his.

Using Subordinators: When using subordinators to transition between ideas, make sure to put a comma in the correct place. If the subordinator comes first in the sentence, there will most likely be a comma at the end of the clause (#1). If the subordinator comes in the middle of the sentence (#2), you will most likely NOT need a comma.

- **When the students left,** the room was suddenly silent.
- The room was suddenly silent **when the students left.**

Connecting Paragraphs

Although *however* and other transitional words are necessary, enabling writers to make dozens of connections neatly and efficiently, they cannot handle the whole transitional load. When a writer needs to move to a new paragraph, he or she must use a transition that is stronger and subtler than what we discussed earlier in the DLA. In this situation, a writer can use a clause or phrase to connect paragraphs.

Look at how firmly paragraphs hold together if the transition is made like this:

... a dear old white-thatched gentleman who embodies the very spirit of loving kindness.

The *loving-kindness* begins to look a little doubtful in view of some of his writing, for Twain wrote some of the most savage satire . . .

Although the last word or phrase of a paragraph frequently serves the simplest and strongest kind of transition, you can go back farther than this, sometimes to even better effect:

... a dear old white-thatched gentleman who embodies the very spirit of loving-kindness.

This *dear old white-thatched gentleman* happens to be the author of some of the most savage satire. . .

Generally speaking, the last sentence of a paragraph is the best place to find the transition for your new paragraph, for this sentence is the one freshest in the reader's mind. If you go back much deeper than this, you will usually need a multiple transition, as in this example:

... No doubt his photographs have helped promote this *image* . . . He looks like . . . the very spirit of loving-kindness.

To accept such an *image* is to betray greater familiarity with the *photographs* than with the writing. Twain wrote some of the most savage satire . . .

All the examples so far have been simple word or phrase transitions. Another variation of the paragraph transition is the idea transition. The principle is the same; you use something from the preceding paragraph, but instead of repeating an exact word or phrase, you refer to the idea just expressed, compressing it into a single phrase:

Mark Twain is . . . the very spirit of loving-kindness.

Such a view of Twain would probably have been a source of amusement to the author himself, for Twain wrote some of the most savage satire . . .

Similarly, you can use a demonstrative pronoun as an idea transition:

Mark Twain is. . . the very spirit of loving-kindness.

This view of Twain would probably have been a source of amusement to the author himself, for Twain wrote some of the most savage satire . . .

In the examples above, no exact words or phrases are repeated from the first paragraphs. However, the transitions are clearly there; the referential *such a view* and *this view* fasten the paragraphs firmly together.

Activities

Check off each box once you have completed the activity.

☐ 1. **Transitions Review**

In your own words, explain why writers need to use transitions.

☐ 2. **Identify Transitional Words**

Using the preceding lists of transitions, locate and underline all the transitional words in the following paragraph. The first sentence is marked as an example.

Another reason for the popularity of beauty pageants is that they are in essence a competitive sport. For instance, each participant showcases a particular talent. Also, the contestants need to cooperate with one another and participate as a team in activities. Finally, they are judged based on particular criteria. There are winners and, unfortunately, losers. In addition, beauty pageants are part of the American fabric and underscore what has historically made this country strong—competition.

☐ 3. **Insert Transitions Words**

Add transitions in the following paragraph.

Beauty pageants have engendered a sense of equality despite a person's race, religion, or disability; _____, several recent cases in beauty pageant history support this notion. In 1984 Vanessa Williams was nominated as the first black Miss America. _____, in 1945 Bess Myerson was crowned the first Jewish Miss America, _____ in 1995 Heather Whitestone was the first Miss America with disabilities.

☐ 4. **Write a Paragraph Transition**

The following paragraph is from a research paper about the effects of child beauty pageants on little girls. Read the paragraph carefully, and then write a transition for the sentence that would start the next paragraph. The topic of the next paragraph is how these pageants expose young children to danger, specifically predators.

Although these toddlers are sometimes displayed in age-appropriate outfits, the majority of the outfits expose them to sexuality at a young age and make them believe attention is gained through appearance. For example, there is a show on TLC called *Toddlers and Tiaras*. In the show, the producers show footage of a three-year old dressed up as a prostitute mimicking the role of Julia Roberts in *Pretty Woman*. Melissa Henderson writes in the article "*Toddlers and Tiaras* and Sexualizing 3-year-olds," "The toddler was wearing the high PVC boots, a blond wig, and a white tank top connected to a tight blue skirt at the midriff by a large silver hoop." These little girls are getting dressed by their own mothers like show girls. These toddler girls look like sexy adults in baby bodies, yet this is wrong because these mothers are teaching their little girls that they have to look sexy to get attention. All these mothers see is how cute their little daughters look in these outfits, but what they really don't think about are their daughters' futures. When the girls are older, they may still want to dress sexy everyday not just for the stage but for extra attention. It will make them believe that the only way they can get people to pay attention to them is by dressing in sexy outfits and that the appropriateness of an outfit is of little importance.

Choose 5a or 5b Below

☐ 5a. **Revise Your Own Work**

Collect some of your written work. Identify areas where you have transitioned between ideas or places where you could compose a transition. Bring this revised work with you to the DLA tutoring session.

If you do not have your own writing to work with, please complete the supplemental activity below (5b).

☐ 5b. **Write Sentences with Transitions**

Combine the following sentences using the specified transition meaning.

1. Use a transition word to *add information*.

The Thompson family lives in Georgia. This family is featured in the reality show, *Here Comes Honey Boo Boo*.

2. Use a transition word of *time*.

The television program aired in mid-2012. Alana, Honey Boo Boo, was featured in the program, *Toddlers and Tiaras*.

3. Use a *cause/effect* transition word.

She has an infectious personality and intriguing family. Millions of people have tuned in every week to watch the show.

4. Use a transition word to *contrast*.

Many criticize the program for being exploitative and dehumanizing. One critic praises the show for its "message of equality."

5. Use a different transition word to *contrast*.

The program at times emphasizes the stereotypical life of a working class Southern white family. It continues to attract viewers.

☐ 6. Review the DLA

Go to <https://mtsac2.mywconline.com> and use the [Mt. SAC Writing Center Appointment System](#) to make a DLA appointment, or sign-up to see a tutor on the "**DLA Walk-in**" list in the Writing Center. During your session with a tutor, explain your understanding of transitioning between points and paragraphs. Consider the main concept you learned in this DLA. Explain to the tutor the benefits and challenges of transitioning.

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Tutor's Signature _____

Date: _____

If you are an individual with a disability and need a greater level of accessibility for any document in The Writing Center or on The Writing Center's website, please contact the Mt. SAC Accessible Resource Centers for Students, access@mtsac.edu, (909) 274-4290.

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