



Bridging the Gaps: Effectively Using Transitions

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The Scott Foresman Handbook for Writers, 6th Edition nicely explains what transition are and why they are important: “[They are] words and phrases that act like hooks, links, and directional signals to keep readers moving from point to point within a paragraph, and from one paragraph to another...When a writer neglects to link old and new information, a paragraph may read more like a random series of observations than a coherent discussion” (220). Therefore, transitions are told that you should use in every essay you write. Keep this handout so you have an at-a-glance guide to aid your search for the perfect transitional word or phrase. Of course, you may also refer to the Scott Foresman Handbook, your instructor, or the writing consultants at the Writers Lab for assistance or ideas. Below, you’ll find categories and examples of various transitions to use throughout your writing endeavors.

Beginning Paragraphs:

in the first (second, third, etc.) place
secondly
in addition
initially
provided that

similarly
at first
for a start
to start with
in a like manner

by the same token
in the same way
first of all
to begin with

Counterargument/Contrast:

alternatively
in contrast
but

on the other hand
whereas
rather

however
instead
while

Emphasis:

specifically
for example

for instance

particularly

Dismiss an Idea and Move on with the Main Point:

In any case
In any event

either way
at any rate

in either case
all the same

Show or Establish Reasons:

Due to
For the simple reason that

because of the fact
owing to

in view of
in fact

Cause/Effect Relationship:

Therefore
As a result

consequently
accordingly

thus
for this reason

To Explain the Consequence:

Under those circumstances	in that case	that being the case
On the condition that	then	if so
Otherwise		

Conditional Statements:

Provided that	given that	granted that
In the hope that	on the condition	unless
So as long	only if	

Concluding Paragraph:

As stated before	to summarize	to put it briefly
In summary	given these points	consquently
To sum up	in conclusion	

Continuation:

Previously	afterwards	eventually
Next	subsequently	

Add an Additional Idea:

Additionally	also	in addition
Furthermore	as well as	besides (this)
Not only (this) but	moreover	and

Reference:

Considering (this)	regarding	in regards to
With respect to	As for	concerning

Introduce Examples and/or Illustrations:

For example	for instance	such as
Especially	namely	specifically
For one thing	to illustrate	

Clarification:

In other words	as a matter of fact	in fact
Actually	after all	indeed
More importantly	besides	