The IUP Writing Center
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TRANSITIONS
BETWEEN SENTENCES & PARAGRAPHS

Why Are Transitions Important?
Transitional words and phrases indicate the relationship between one paragraph and another. Transitions act like bridges to cross gaps that often occur between the sentences and paragraphs as the writer moves on to another topic or point. Without transitions, your reader may not be able to understand the flow of the paper and the progress of your thinking.

Transitions between Paragraphs
When linking two paragraphs, the writer must demonstrate or explain how the two paragraphs are linked. This can be done with some imagination and a single sentence. The beginning of a paragraph demonstrates a shift from one explanation to another. You need to keep in mind that yiour train of thought needs to be clear to your reader. In order to do this, there are several strategies that you may use for developing a clear and thorough connection. One basic way id to find the commonality between the two phases of your subject in the corresponding paragraphs.

- **Pronouns**
  The use of pronouns between two paragraphs helps to build the bridge among your thoughts. The pronouns the refer to a person, place, or thing—this, that, them, he/she, these, those, etc.—which was presented in the previous paragraph helps to make your transition flow very effectively.
- **Repetition of Key Words/Ideas**
  This is a very simple form, often referred to as a "paragraph hook." Using a key word from the preceding paragraph in the beginning sentence of your new paragraph, usually provides a smooth transition. Taking the reader back to the key words in the previous paragraph guides them with ease into a new phase of your paper.

Example: No transitional phrase

Teresa Gonzalez eventually left Mexico for the United States to pursue her education in law, denied to her in Mexico. She plans on returning to Mexico one day to help her fellow citizens, particularly those in rural areas who need representation in the halls of power.

Antonio Duerte relocated his entire family to the United States. A citizen of an unidentified South American country, Antonio feared for his family's safety, and therefore undertook the difficult step of leaving his country for another.

Example: With transitional phrase (repetition of key words)

Teresa Ayala eventually left Mexico for the United States to pursue her education in law, denied to her in Mexico. She plans on returning to Mexico one day to help her fellow citizens, particularly those in rural areas who need representation in the halls of power.

Antonio Duerte's reasons for leaving his country for the United States are even more compelling than Teresa's. He relocated his entire family to the United States. A citizen of an unidentified South American country, Antonio feared for his family's safety, and therefore undertook the difficult step of leaving his country for another.

Example: With transitional phrase (pronouns)

Teresa Ayala eventually left Mexico for the United States to pursue her education in law, denied to her in Mexico. She plans on returning to Mexico one day to help her fellow citizens, particularly those in rural areas who need representation in the halls of power.

Although she possessed great reasons for leaving, Antonio Duerte's grounds for relocation were even more compelling. He relocated his entire family to the United States. A citizen of an unidentified South American country, Antonio feared for his family's safety, and therefore undertook the difficult step of leaving his country for another.

Often times you may have a lot of trouble thinking of a transition that helps your paper flow smoothly. Go back and re-read your paragraph—you may not need to make a new paragraph quite yet. There may be something crucial missing within that paragraph that is not making an ending to it sound natural. Also, there is a chance that your paragraph belongs in a different place on your paper. Go over the organization and make sure all of your ideas are arranged effectively.

TRANSITION WORDS BETWEEN SENTENCES

The transitional words listed below are somewhat weak if used in the wrong way. You should not overuse these words just because you feel they connect your ideas. You want them to appear naturally, tying ideas and sentences together. Often times you can use the examples given for paragraphs between sentences as well.

To repeat an idea just stated
In other words,
That is,
To repeat,
Again,

To illustrate an idea
For example,
For instance,
In particular,
To illustrate,

To show cause and effect
As a result,
For this reason,
Therefore,
Hence,
Consequently,
Accordingly,

To announce a contrast, a change in direction
Yet,
However,
Still,
Nevertheless,
On the other hand,
In contrast,
Instead of,
On the contrary,
Conversely,
Notwithstanding,
In spite of this,

Conclusion
In short,
To conclude,
In brief,
On the whole