



TOOLKIT

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17 IDEAS FOR TEACHERS USING
A Writer's Guide to Transitional Words and Expressions
and
A Writer's Guide to Using 8 Methods of Transition

A Writer's Guide to Transitional Words and Expressions (7th printing, \$12.95 + \$5.25 S&H - USA) and **A Writer's Guide to Using 8 Methods of Transition** (3rd printing, \$12.95 + \$5.25 S&H - USA). **A Writer's Guide to Powerful Paragraphs** (\$18.95 + \$5.25 S&H - USA). Our newest title for **Pellegrino's Writer's Guide SERIES: A Writer's Guide to Perfect Punctuation** (\$14.95 + 5.25 S&H - USA) **ORDER ALL 4** (\$8.50 S&H - USA). **ORDER IN 1 of 4 WAYS:** WRITE TO: Maui arThoughts Co., P.O. Box 967, Wailuku, HI, USA 96793-0967; PHONE or FAX: 808-244-0156; Phone or Fax Orders TOLL FREE: 800-403-3472; E-MAIL: orders to booksmaui@hawaii.rr.com Inquire about quantity orders, school discounts and shipping. Visit us at booksmaui.com

**Make instructions to students clear.
Provide examples.
Work through exercises yourself before assigning them.**

When you first teach transition, allow students to overuse transitional words and expressions in their writing. Later, when students have a clear understanding of the fifteen ways to use transitional words and expressions, teach them how to achieve a greater variety of transitional methods in order to reduce transitional redundancies. To do this, move from **A WRITER'S GUIDE TO TRANSITIONAL WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS** to **A WRITER'S GUIDE TO USING 8 METHODS OF TRANSITION**. Teach Chapters 2-8.

1. Students need to learn how to control transition, to identify and edit text that is overloaded with transitions, and to avoid superfluous transitions. Have them practice incorporating all eight methods. Ask students to identify and label each method of transition that they have used in their writing. In this way, they will learn how to achieve greater transitional variety and avoid a flat writing style.
2. Use high-lighting techniques. Have students mark transitions with a variety of colored high-lighter pens. Having students consciously identify transitions in their own writing is a key to helping them see how they have succeeded in linking and organizing their ideas clearly, point by point, so that their readers can follow their ideas, information, etc.... In addition, they may realize that they have used too few transitions or, perhaps, incorrect or confusing transitions.
3. Use the "linked haiku" approach. Each student writes a main idea sentence. Then they exchange papers with each other. Students add ideas, sentences and paragraphs that incorporate at least one transition. Students should then share their writing by reading their paper aloud. Discussion should center on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the transitions used.
4. Use a cloze (fill in the blank) exercise. A good approach is to project transparencies or pages from a computer to allow for more collaborative learning to take place. To do this exercise, provide one or more paragraphs and leave blanks for transitions. For each paragraph, provide a list of transitions in random order. For more advanced students, do the same exercise but do not provide a list of transitions. Have the students use the lists in **A WRITER'S GUIDE TO TRANSITIONAL WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS** to locate transitions and place them in logical order.
5. Ask students to compare different kinds of writing (fiction, poetry, news or feature stories, essays, scientific articles, etc...) to determine which authors use transition more than others. Have students bring books, magazines and newspapers from home. Ask students to make a list any of the eight transitional methods that each author employs as well as a count of each kind of transition.

6. Use the cut and paste approach. Try this old “scissors” method using computers. Provide a list of from five to seven sentences in random order. All sentences should focus on one specific subject and contain a transitional word or expression. Ask students to reorganize the sentences by placing them in order. Have students highlight or circle the transitions.
7. Use strip sentences. Do this exercise in groups or with the class as a whole. Write six or seven sentences (each with a transitional word or expression) one on each of six or seven pieces of large paper. Ask students in each group to stand and share their sentences. Then students should shuffle themselves, from left to right, so that the sentences are in the correct order. When students master this, move to a more complex level by using fifteen or twenty sentences. Later, paragraphs may be added that incorporate the transitional paragraph, end-of-paragraph transition, and beginning-of-paragraph transition.
8. Use multiple choice strip sentences. Provide students with three paragraphs of about six or seven sentences each. Have the students determine which paragraph is written with the best sentences (the one containing the most effective transitions).
9. Ask students to identify transitional methods by reading books from a variety of disciplines. The books students use for their classes will be best, so have them bring three or four to class. Ask the students to identify (either by high-lighting or circling) any one or more of the eight methods of transition. This exercise is an excellent way to teach context clues in reading, too.
10. Use sentence combining exercises and techniques.
11. Let transitional devices dictate structure and organization. Students can use transitional words and expressions (discourse markers) to organize and develop their ideas, or they can use the other seven methods of transition. Here are six examples: (# 12–17)
12. Use SPATIAL TRANSITION: Students write a paragraph in which they provide directions from place A to place B (on campus). They then high-light all transitions and trade papers. Students then follow the directions and report the results during the next class. Students should be encouraged to edit their classmates’ papers to achieve greater transitional accuracy and clarity. This exercise will provide lively class discussion. Some students may even have gotten lost. Obviously, the writing lacked clear directional transitions.
13. Use SEQUENTIAL, INCREASING IMPORTANCE and COMPARISON-CONTRAST TRANSITION: Students can select two or three experiences, say initial problems they encountered adjusting to a new college, new country or new situation. Using different transitional words and expressions from these three categories, they can first write their narrative in chronological sequence; next, they can write about the same experiences, but in climactic sequence—from the least to the most important point; after that, they can write about their experiences by comparing and contrasting them. For each of these three approaches, you will be letting transition silently “dictate” their structure and organization. Ask students to highlight their transitions. After sharing the results of this exercise, discuss why and how writing is organized by incorporating transition.
14. Use CLASSIFY AND DIVIDE and REPETITION OF KEY WORDS AND PHRASES: In an introductory paragraph, have students select a subject and then divide it into three parts. Then have them use transitional words or repetition of words for each of three subsequential paragraphs and then for a conclusion. Ask students to highlight or circle their transitions.
15. Use PRONOUN REFERENCE: Have students circle all nouns and pronouns and then draw connecting lines with arrows from the pronouns to their antecedents. Pay particular attention to the use of “this”—used to relate an extended idea and not just a single word.
16. Use WORD SUBSTITUTION: Have students identify word substitution in a paragraph—the synonyms that are used by writers to achieve sentence variety. E.g., home, house, dwelling, residence, pad; youngster, juvenile, teenager, young adult. Discuss problems that result from overusing synonyms or using synonyms not consistent with style and tone.
17. Use END, BEGINNING, and PARAGRAPH TRANSITION: Have students select two subjects (e.g., Japan and US—narrowed down to, say, breakfast foods). Then have them use end, beginning and paragraph transitions for the same subjects. Students should label each paragraph according to the transitional method used as well as highlight their transitions.