

# Writing a Smooth Paper

A Writing Center Presentation  
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“Faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life” (NIV, Titus 1.2).



# Tools for Writing a Smooth Paper

- Transition Words & Phrases
- Sentence Clarity & Variety
- Paragraph Coherence
- Paragraph-to-Paragraph Coherence
- Practice Revising for Logical Flow and Coherence



# Transition Words & Phrases

- Use transition words and phrases to show the direction of your thoughts.
- A lack of transitions to aid logical flow can cause confusion.
- Without transitions, important ideas can be completely missed or misinterpreted.

# Lists of Transition Words & Phrases

- **Addition:** also, in addition, too, moreover, and, besides, furthermore, equally important, then, finally
- **Example:** for example, for instance, thus, as an illustration, namely, specifically
- **Contrast:** but, yet, however on the one hand/on the other hand, nevertheless, nonetheless, conversely, in contrast, still, at the same time
- **Comparison:** similarly, likewise, in the same way
- **Concession:** of course, to be sure, certainly, granted

**Troyka, L.Q. *Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers*. Fifth Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ : 1999 (77-78).**

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# More Transition Words & Phrases

- **Result:** therefore, thus, as a result, so, accordingly
- **Summary:** hence, in short, in brief, in summary, in conclusion, finally
- **Sequence:** first, second, third, next, then, finally, afterwards, before, soon, later, meanwhile, subsequently, immediately, eventually, currently
- **Place:** in the front, in the foreground, in the back, in the background, at the side, adjacent, nearby, in the distance, here, there

Troyka, L.Q. *Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers*. Fifth Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ : 1999 (77-78).

# Using Transition Words & Phrases


■ Use transition words and phrases to show the direction of your thoughts.


■ **Example without transitional phrase:**

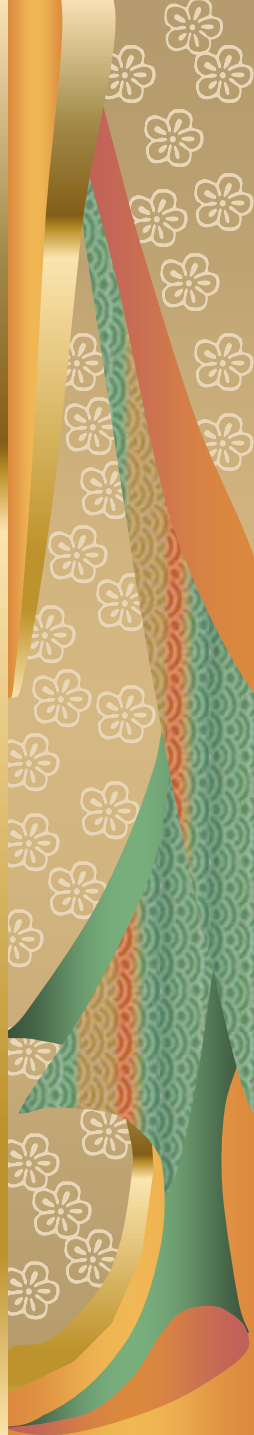
Vanilla ice cream is popular in America.  
Other nations prefer chocolate.

■ **Example with transition phrase:** Vanilla ice cream is popular in America, although other nations prefer chocolate.

# Another Example

 **Example:** Most children like strawberry ice cream. Pistachio is not usually their favorite.

 **Revision:** Most children like strawberry ice cream. Pistachio, on the other hand, is not usually their favorite.



# Sentence Variety & Clarity

- Combine short, choppy sentences.
- Vary subject-verb structure by incorporating participial phrases starting with –ing or –ed verbs.
- Hierarchize elements in your sentences for emphasis.
- Read your writing aloud to hear awkward constructions and unnecessary repetition.



# Paragraph Coherence

- Make sure the sentences in each paragraph are in logical order, usually with the topic or claim sentence first, followed by evidence.
- Use transitions to aid logical flow between ideas and evidence.

# Example: Incoherent Paragraph

There are political events. In this paper I will discuss why people should be more aware of current events. A natural disaster, an earthquake, could happen any moment. This is not political, but it is still an event. Reading about a disaster in the newspaper is different from actually living it.



# A Possible Revision

Reading about a disaster in the newspaper is different from actually experiencing it firsthand. However, grand-scale incidents, whether natural or political, touch the lives of all individuals to a certain degree. Consequently, people need to cultivate an awareness of current events.



# Paragraph-to-Paragraph Coherence

- The paragraphs in your essay should flow logically from one to another.
- Transition sentences concluding one paragraph and beginning another help to bridge parts of the discussion.
- Without transition “bridges” between paragraphs, the discussion will seem disjointed.

# Revise for Coherence & Flow

It is sophisticated enough to be considered a true art form. Origami is the art of paper folding. Origami is easy enough for children to learn. It uses elegant paper with elaborate designs. It originated in Japan. It was traditionally used for ceremonial purposes.



# A Possible Revision

Origami, or the art of paper folding, is easy enough for children to learn and sophisticated enough to be considered a true art form. It originated in Japan and was traditionally used for ceremonial purposes, often using elegant paper with elaborate designs.



# Summary

- Use transitions to show the direction of discussion.
- Transitions may be used as single “pivot” words or as phrases.
- Paragraphs also need transition sentences to aid logical flow, including paragraph-to-paragraph flow.

# The Writing Center

For more help with writing a paper, contact the Writing Center.

- Where: 2nd Floor of Scott Academic Center
- When: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mon. through Fri.
- How: Drop by in person, call x426, or e-mail Dr. Lee at <[KLee@vanguard.edu](mailto:KLee@vanguard.edu)>.
- What else: Thanks for your interest in our resources!

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