

Rubric Category	Organization
Grade/Score	Grades 6-12 / Scores 3 and 4
CCSS Writing Standards	W1, W1a, W1c
Argument Type	All arguments

Beyond Basic Transitions

Students will practice assembling the larger pieces of their argument through critical connections of thought.

Understanding the Expectations

You probably already know to use basic transitions in your writing. In between paragraphs, you may say something like “In addition to,” or “However.” Beyond the use of transitions, though, you should use deliberately chosen words, phrases, and clauses to establish links within and between ideas.

Transitions create a sense of logic in your writing, making your writing easier to follow and your argument more robust. Along with transitional words, or idea connectors, you must connect the larger “chunks” of your argument with critical thought. The most successfully written arguments will use transitional words and phrases along with strategies to connect ideas in increasingly sophisticated ways.

You are likely finding that you have a number of transitional phrases that work well for you, helping you connect ideas, and you use them frequently. At this stage, it is important to branch out beyond the basics.

Basic Transitions

Consider the comprehensive list below and begin diversifying your use of transitional words and phrases.

Logical Relationship	Transitional Expression	Example
Similarity	also, in the same way, just as ... so too, likewise, similarly, as in	Just as you would like to be treated with respect, so too should you treat others.
Contrast	but, however, in spite of, on the one hand ... on the other hand, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, in contrast, on the contrary, still, yet	In spite of all the crowds, I still love New York City during the holiday season.
Sequence	first, second, third, ... next, then, finally, meanwhile, earlier, currently, recently, subsequently, before, during, later	First, you must pass the bar examination, then you may practice law.
Time	after, afterward, at last, before, currently, during, earlier, immediately, later, meanwhile, now, recently, simultaneously, subsequently, then	Spiderman's super power is simultaneously a gift and a curse.
Example	for example, for instance, namely, specifically, to illustrate	Competing in sports offers many benefits. For example, you stay physically fit while enjoying the social experience of bonding with your teammates.

Logical Relationship	Transitional Expression	Example
Emphasis	even, indeed, in fact, of course, truly, moreover, with this in mind, ultimately	Indeed, George Washington remains one of American history's greatest presidents and most effective generals.
Cause and effect	accordingly, consequently, hence, so, therefore, thus, henceforth	I packed for the trip in such haste that, consequently, I forgot my bathing suit.
Asserting an obvious truth or conceding a point	no doubt, undoubtedly, without a doubt, of course,	No doubt, adopting a child in need is one of the most rewarding experiences.
Additional support or evidence	additionally, again, also, and, as well, besides, equally important, further, furthermore, in addition, moreover, then	Smoking is detrimental to your health. Additionally, it may cost you thousands of dollars a year.
Conclusion/summary	finally, in a word, ultimately, in brief, briefly, in conclusion, in the end, in the final analysis, on the whole, thus, to conclude, to summarize, in sum, to sum up, in summary	Ultimately, we should be grateful for what we have this Thanksgiving and make efforts to share our abundance with others.

Trying it Out

Transitional Paragraphs

When drafting your work, and chiefly in the later stages of revision, it may be helpful to craft transitional paragraphs between sections of your paper. This often applies in longer, more extensive writing projects, involving copious research. Moderate use of transitional paragraphs summarizing the information or evidence already covered and indicating its significance will strengthen your argument's effect.

Activity:

1. Quickly scan a working draft or a paper in need of revision.
2. Are there any points at which your work will benefit from a complete, separate transitional paragraph?
3. Using a highlighter, make a note of this in your work.
4. Jot down any details or notes that occur to you that will be helpful when you revise.

Transitions Between Paragraphs

Your content of one paragraph should lead logically to the next. A transitional phrase or statement should highlight a relationship that already exists. A transition between paragraphs can be a transitional word, a phrase, or a sentence. Transitions can be at the end of the first paragraph, at the beginning of the second paragraph, or in both places.

Activity:

1. Quickly scan a working draft or a paper in need of revision.
2. Are there any points at which your work will benefit from smaller transitions between paragraphs—at the end of one or the beginning of the next?
3. Using a highlighter, make a note of this in your work.
4. Jot down any details or notes that occur to you that will be helpful when you revise.

Consider the checklist below, designed to help you go “beyond basic” with connecting ideas:

- Be mindful of using a greater variety of transitional words and phrases.
- Use transitional paragraphs where appropriate.
- Use transitions between paragraphs where appropriate.

Using a draft of an essay in progress or in need of revision, begin to actively read through your writing with the above checklist in mind. Use a highlighter and writing tool to mark up your work with an editing plan. Take 5-10 minutes. If you have the opportunity, switch papers with an editing partner and apply the same

approach to their work. Be sure to use a different highlighter and ink color to allow your partner to differentiate between editing suggestions when they apply revisions strategies and redraft their work in a moment.

Regroup with your partner and discuss your plans and suggestions. Clarify any concerns.

Writing it Up

Whether you are in the earlier stages of writing or are revising a final draft, use your highlighted drafts to guide your revisions. Make the changes that you have begun to plan, being mindful of where the reader of your paper will need some help or guidance in seeing your logical connections. Continue to draft your work, keeping in mind where to apply transitional moments.