

APPROPRIATE TRANSITIONS INFORMATIVE WRITING



GRADE 6

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Classroom Procedure:

1. Introduce the lesson by writing a sentence like this on the board. “Jill was taking an umbrella and raincoat to school. It was a very bright and sunny day. It might rain.” Ask students to interpret what the writer was trying to say. Ask students, is it going to rain, or is it going to be sunny? Rewrite the sentence using a transitional phrase. “*Even though* it was sunny and bright outside, Jill was taking an umbrella and raincoat to school *because* it might rain.” What group of sentences flows better?
2. Distribute *What are transitions?* content pages. Read and review the information with the students. Assist students with the question. Use the additional resources to enhance understanding.
3. Distribute *Types of Transitions* content pages. Read and review the information with the students. Remind students with the example of how overusing transition words or phrases can be just as confusing as not using any. Use the additional resources to enhance understanding
4. Distribute the Activity page. The Activity may be completed as a pair/share activity. Read and review the instructions.
5. Distribute the Practice page. Check and review the students’ responses. Read aloud to the class exemplary work on the paragraph by students.
6. Distribute the Homework page. The next day, check and review the students’ responses.
7. In closing, ask students: What are transitions? How do writers use transitions to make their writing clearer to readers or the intended audience? When is the appropriate time to use a transition or transitional phrase? What is the problem using too many transitional words or phrases?

Approximate Grade Level: 6

Objectives: Students will know transitions connect ideas and concepts. Students will know transitions create cohesive and comprehensible connections for readers. Students will know transitions can be single words or phrases. Students will know the types of transitions, when to use transitions, and differentiate between appropriate or overuse of transitions in informational writing.

State Educational Standards*

LB.ELA.LITERACY.W.6.2.C

LB.ELA.LITERACY.W.6.1.C

LB.ELA.LITERACY.W.6.3.C

LB.ELA.LITERACY.L.6.5.B

Class Sessions (45 minutes):

At least 2 class sessions.

Teaching Materials/Worksheets:

What are transitions? and *Types of Transitions* content pages (2), Activity pages (3), Practice page, Homework page

Student Supplies: Handouts, scissors, glue, highlighter, pencils or pens

Prepare Ahead of Time: Copy handouts.

Options for Lesson: Students may work alone or in groups for the Activity. As an alternative to the Activity or introduction to the lesson, have students bring magazines to class. On different walls, post chart paper with these titles: Place, Time, Compare or Contrast, Cause or Effect, Summary or Conclusion, and Sequence or Order. Students will choose a magazine with several paragraphs. In teams, students will cut out the transition words and phrases found throughout the magazine including in advertisements. The student teams will keep a count of the number of transitions and will paste them on the chart with the title matching the type of transition word. Have a contest to see which group of students can find the most words. The great thing is you will have anchor charts for every type of transition and students will see how transitions are used!

*Lessons are aligned to meet the education objectives and goals of most states. For more information on your state objectives, contact your local Board of Education or Department of Education in your state.



Teacher Notes

The lesson introduces identifying the types of transitional words and phrases used by writers and how to use them appropriately in writing informational texts. Transitions clarify for readers the writer's ideas, concepts, and thoughts as well as the relationships between sentences or paragraphs. The objective of the lesson is to provide students with an understanding of how writers group information and how writers use transitions to create a smooth flow to the next paragraph. The main takeaway for students is transitional words and phrases create clarity and unity when used appropriately in writing informational texts.

What are transitions?

Transitions in writing are words and phrases that connect ideas in sentences and paragraphs. Using transitions makes our writing flow evenly and without interruption. They unify writing under one theme. Look at this illustration. What happens to the power if one of the lines is disconnected from the power source? Even if the energy is flowing to your house without interruption what has to happen for your devices that use electricity to work? That is what transitions do. Think of your sentences like power lines. They connect to the next line and to the next and so on bringing power to your home. The outlets in your home are like paragraphs. Readers plugin to connect to the power source – your writing!



If your writing reads or looks like this, you probably are not organizing your ideas using transitions correctly. Writers convey ideas and information clearly. They accomplish this by organizing and connecting through transition sentences and paragraphs into a central idea (main idea) or what the informative text is all about.

Let's look at an example in this short paragraph. Why is the family extending their vacation?

Our family decided to stay a few extra days in Disney World to see the firework show. We are staying longer because we did not want to miss going to Epcot Center.

It is unclear exactly why the family is taking a more extended vacation. Is it to see the fireworks, or go to Epcot, or both? Here is where inserting a transition word or phrase will make the writer's intent clearer.

Our family decided to stay a few extra days in Disney World to see the firework show. **Another reason** we are staying longer is because we did not want to miss going to Epcot Center.

It is now clear the family is staying longer to see the fireworks show and go to Epcot Center. Read the next short paragraph and make the meaning clearer by rewriting the sentence using transition words.

Making cupcakes is easy. Open the box and place the ingredients in a mixing bowl. Milk and eggs are put in the bowl. Stir and pour the mixture in a baking pan. Bake for twenty minutes and take them from the oven. Enjoy! **Transition Words: then finally next first**

Types of Transitions

You have learned transition words or phrases connect ideas. Writers use these words or phrases to group and link ideas. Using transition words or phrases adds clarity to writing. There are different types of transition words. The chart below is a list of the type of transition word and some examples.

Types of Transition Words

Place

above, below, underneath, between, inside,
outside, nearby, across, adjacent, beyond

Time

sometimes, whenever, immediately, later, afterward,
then, now, after, before, simultaneously, during

Compare or Contrast

however, likewise, similarly, on the other hand,
nonetheless, but, in the same way, nevertheless

Cause or Effect

because, since, probably, consequently, in that case, since,
for that reason, frequently, so then, so that

Summary or Conclusion

in conclusion, in summary, all in all, in short,
in the final analysis, ultimately, altogether

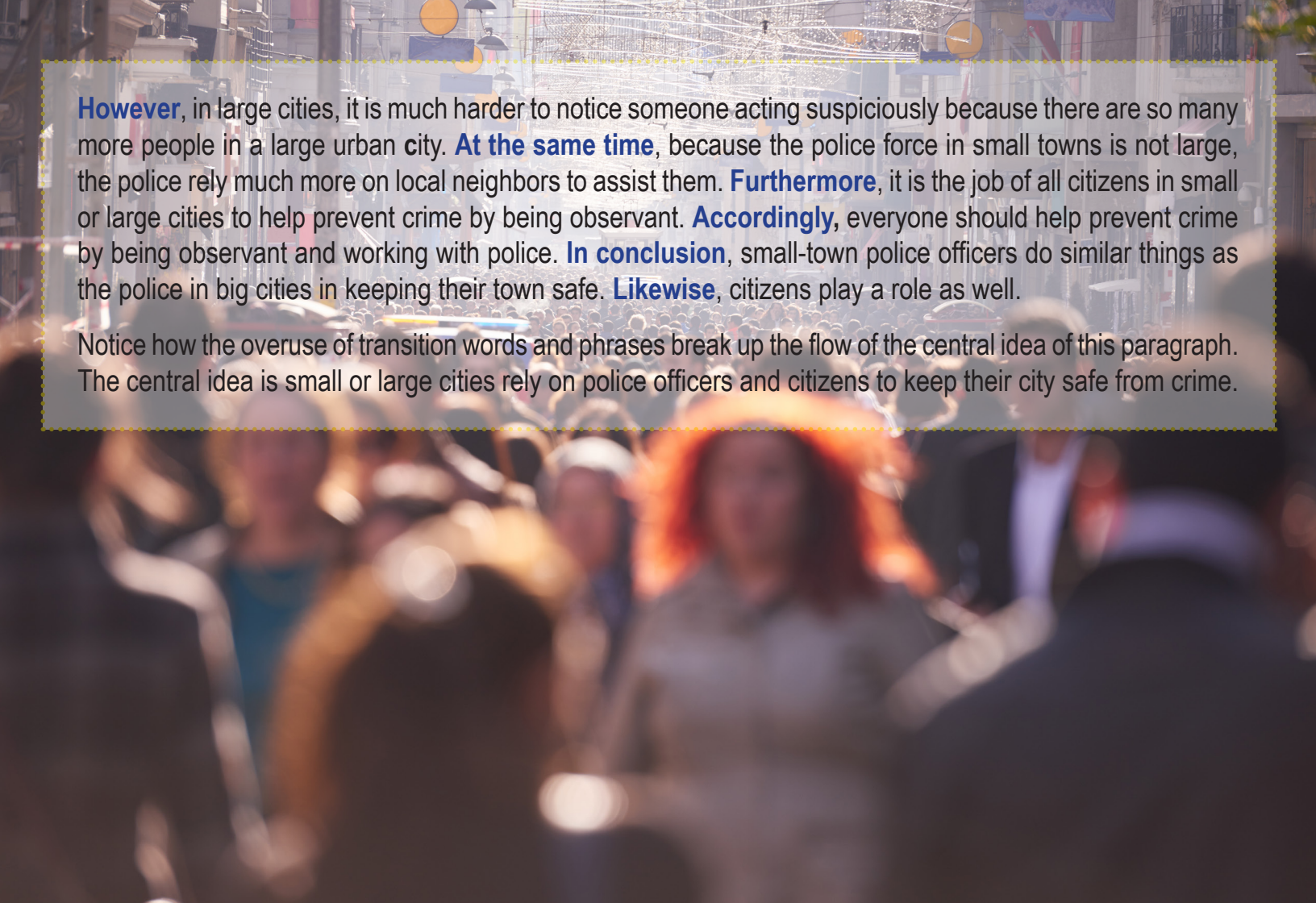
Sequence or Order

first, next, last, finally, additionally, further,
second, third (etc.), lastly, besides, also, and, or

How do you know when to use a transition word or phrase? Here is one way to know. Read your writing aloud. Does it sound choppy? Does the language flow? Is your meaning clear without having to explain it? Writers determine the transitions that best support the purpose of a text and when to use them.

Not every sentence requires a transitional word or phrase. Using too many transitions is worse than not having any at all. Use transition words phrases sparingly, and only when you are trying to connect ideas and concepts for the reader. **Here is an example of the overuse of transitions.**

Small towns are like big cities in wanting to keep citizens safe. **Therefore**, it is the job of the police to keep the town safe. **For example**, if the police see someone acting suspiciously, they take notice and watch.



However, in large cities, it is much harder to notice someone acting suspiciously because there are so many more people in a large urban city. **At the same time**, because the police force in small towns is not large, the police rely much more on local neighbors to assist them. **Furthermore**, it is the job of all citizens in small or large cities to help prevent crime by being observant. **Accordingly**, everyone should help prevent crime by being observant and working with police. **In conclusion**, small-town police officers do similar things as the police in big cities in keeping their town safe. **Likewise**, citizens play a role as well.

Notice how the overuse of transition words and phrases break up the flow of the central idea of this paragraph. The central idea is small or large cities rely on police officers and citizens to keep their city safe from crime.





Instructions: Cut out the words on the next page and then classify the transition words by pasting the words into the categories on the chart.

| Time | Place | Cause or Effect | Compare or Contrast |
|------|-------|-----------------|---------------------|
| | | | |

Student Hint: Use the word or phrase in a sentence. That will help you classify the words.



List of Transition Words

| | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Accordingly | In the event that | Below | As the result of | Because of the |
| Just as...So to | Previously | Underneath | Behind | In the future |
| As a result | Because (of this) | If...then | Adjacent to | For that reason |
| Consequently | Nevertheless | To begin with | In the same way | In front (of) |
| For this reason | At the same time | In the same way | Nearby | Opposite to |
| Therefore | In the event that | Afterwards | In view of | Later |
| Then | Without delay | In that case | Now | For this reason |
| Before | Occasionally | After | For example | In order to |
| Prior to | At the present time | Beyond | Comparatively | In contrast |
| Without delay | In that case | So long as | Most likely | The effect is |



Instructions: Read the sentences from a report about a bill in Congress to raise the speed limit. Choose the correct transition word that goes in the blank. An example is done for you.

Furthermore, the Senate voted for the bill raising the speed limit on local highways.

Because of Furthermore Adjacent to Until now

_____ the White House, Congress was meeting to decide the next times for committee meetings.

Between Around Nearby Further

_____, the public waited to hear the outcome of the Congressional committee meetings.

Meanwhile Sometimes Whenever Always

_____ to the divided Senate, the House seemed willing to compromise on the bill.

In contrast At the same time On the contrary However

_____, the Senate was forced to accept the House bill as written without changes.

Probably Consequently Adjacent to Until now

_____ the Senate and the House agreed to the bill, and the President promised to veto it.

Even if For that reason To this end For that reason

_____, the voters in the next election will decide who is right on this issue.

Given that In order that In addition Ultimately

_____, everyone will need to adhere to the current law even if they all agree it needs to change.

Without delay In the meantime Sooner or later From time to time

_____, Congress moves slowly when changing laws even when the public is in agreement.

Rather than Assuming that In conclusion In the distance

Instructions: The above sentences are part of a paragraph about making laws. Use the sentences to rewrite the paragraph using the fewest transitions that make the article clear to a reader.



Homework

Name _____ Date _____



Instructions: Circle the transition words or phrases in the sentences.

1. I like to go to the movies; in fact, the movies are the best place to spend a hot summer afternoon!
2. It appeared a storm was moving into the area; even so, the umpires continued with the game.
3. Next, we will need to turn the oven to 350^o and let it warm up for a few minutes.
4. In conclusion, based on the number of viewers, soccer may be the most popular sport in the world.
5. My teacher will accept late homework. However, she takes points off the assignment.
6. Yesterday my parents and I went to the park for a picnic.
7. Teresa was the first on the bus even though she was the last person to leave class.
8. Though Brent thought his time was not good enough to win, in fact, his time was good enough for first.
9. The writer made the characters in the book come alive. To sum up, the book is an excellent read!
10. However, even students who study hard still sometimes do not do well on tests.
11. Learning to play a musical instrument is hard. In the same way, learning a new sport can be hard too.
12. After that, I ran home as fast as possible to catch the mailman delivering the mail.
13. Tanya did not finish her homework. Consequently, she could not go out to play with her friends.
14. Even though everyone had left the basketball court, Trey remained to practice free throws.
15. At the present time, it seems unlikely my team will win the championship game.
16. The fire began to spread. Without delay, the neighbors grabbed a water hose dousing the flames.
17. Assuming we all know what our job is, we can finish the task much faster.
18. Rather than argue with the referee over the call, the team chose to continue to play.
19. In the first place, you simply cannot glue the wings to the body without first fixing the tail section.
20. Sooner or later, you have to complete the research report because it is due on Friday.

What do you notice about many transitional phrases (Hint: punctuation)? Does this help you to identify transitional phrases? _____



List of Transition Words

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Accordingly CE | In the event that CE | Below P | As the result of CE | Because of the CE |
| Just as ...So to CE | Previously T | Underneath P | Behind P | In the future T |
| As a result CE | Because (of this) CE | If...then CE | Adjacent to P | For that reason CE |
| Consequently CE | Nevertheless CC | To begin with T | In the same way CC | In front (of) P |
| For this reason CE | At the same time T | In the same way CC | Nearby P | Opposite to P |
| Therefore CE | In the event that CE | Afterwards T | In view of CE | Later T |
| Then T | Without delay T | In that case CE | Now T | For this reason CE |
| Before T | Occasionally T | After T | For example CC | In order to CE |
| Prior to T | At the present time T | Beyond P | Comparatively CC | In contrast CC |
| Without delay T | In that case CC | So long as T | Most likely CE | The effect is CE |

Answer Key

**T = Time P = Place

CE = Cause or Effect

CC = Compare or Contrast



Instructions: Read the sentences from a report about a bill in Congress to raise the speed limit. Choose the correct transition word that goes in the blank. An example is done for you.

Furthermore, the Senate voted for the bill raising the speed limit on local highways.

Because of Furthermore Adjacent to Until now

_____ the White House, Congress was meeting to decide the next times for committee meetings.

Between Around **Nearby** Further

_____, the public waited to hear the outcome of the Congressional committee meetings.

Meanwhile Sometimes Whenever Always

_____ to the divided Senate, the House seemed willing to compromise on the bill.

In contrast At the same time On the contrary However

_____, the Senate was forced to accept the House bill as written without changes.

Probably **Consequently** Adjacent to Until now

_____ the Senate and the House agreed to the bill, and the President promised to veto it.

Even if For that reason To this end For that reason

_____, the voters in the next election will decide who is right on this issue.

Given that In order that In addition **Ultimately**

_____, everyone will need to adhere to the current law even if they all agree it needs to change.

Without delay **In the meantime** Sooner or later From time to time

_____, Congress moves slowly when changing laws even when the public is in agreement.

Rather than Assuming that **In conclusion** In the distance

Instructions: The above sentences are part of a paragraph about making laws. Use the sentences to rewrite the paragraph using the fewest transitions that make the article clear to a reader.

Answers will vary. Most students will use 2 or 3 transition phrases.



Instructions: Circle the transition words or phrases in the sentences.

1. I like to go to the movies; **in fact**, the movies are the best place to spend a hot summer afternoon!
2. It appeared a storm was moving into the area; **even so**, the umpires continued with the game.
3. **Next**, we will need to turn the oven to 350° and let it warm up for a few minutes.
4. **In conclusion**, based on the number of viewers, soccer may be the most popular sport in the world.
5. My teacher will accept late homework. **However**, she takes points off the assignment.
6. **Yesterday** my parents and I went to the park for a picnic.
7. Teresa was the first on the bus **even though** she was the last person to leave class.
8. Though Brent thought his time was not good enough to win, **in fact**, his time was good enough for first.
9. The writer made the characters in the book come alive. **To sum up**, the book is an excellent read!
10. **However**, even students who study hard still sometimes do not do well on tests.
11. Learning to play a musical instrument is hard. **In the same way**, learning a new sport can be hard too.
12. **After that**, I ran home as fast as possible to catch the mailman delivering the mail.
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17. **Assuming** we all know what our job is, we can finish the task much faster.
18. **Rather than** argue with the referee over the call, the team chose to continue to play.
19. **In the first place**, you simply cannot glue the wings to the body without first fixing the tail section.
20. **Sooner or later**, you have to complete the research report because it is due on Friday.

What do you notice about many transitional phrases (Hint: punctuation)? Does this help you to identify transitional phrases? Many of the transitional phrases have a comma following the end of the phrase. Yes, because commas are a clue indicate to readers a separation of words, phrases, or ideas to prevent misreading the writer's intended meaning.