

# Transition Words

## Essential Questions



- HOW DO TRANSITION WORDS ENHANCE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION?
- HOW CAN TRANSITION WORDS STRENGTHEN ORGANIZATION?

## Learning Intention / Overview

A student spends time brainstorming their writing topic and then writes a rough draft that has beautiful word choice, but, wait... There's no organization to tie the ideas together. This is what so many students and their writing falls prey to. The use of transition words can be difficult and frustrating, but remains a vital component for proficient and distinguished writers. This mini lesson provides modelling and practice for students to see how transitions enhance the flow of ideas and in conveying one's meaning. Without transitions, the links and connecting with writing are broken.

## Methods / Teaching Strategies

- Modelling
- Independent practice

## Assessment of Learning

- Transitions Practice (provided)

## How might you customize or alter this lesson?

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## Key Learning Areas

Organization in writing

## Concepts Taught

Transition words & phrases

## Target Age

9 – 18 Year Olds

## Duration

3 x 60 minute Session

## You will need:

A draft that students have previously written

Transitions handout



**edgalaxy.com**

Cool Stuff for Nerdy Teachers

## Online Resources:

- <http://edgalaxy.com/education-quotes>
- <http://edgalaxy.com/classroom-posters-charts/2013/9/10/14-educational-quotes-posters>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPnYfwLOW84>

# Teaching Instructions

1. Teaching students to use transitions is vital to expressing one's ideas! Do not share with them the focus for today's mini lesson.
2. Instead, begin by sharing the paragraph (Sample 1) about Thanksgiving with students.
3. Ask students to reflect on the paragraph's strengths and weaknesses. If students are familiar with the Six Traits of Writing, this is a great opportunity to have them score each of the traits, identifying the strongest and weakest areas.
4. After discussion, tell students that "transitions" are needed to give this paragraph a defined order and logic to the events that are being discussed.
5. Ask students to refer to their transitions handout and find appropriate transitions to improve the paragraph's organization and fluency.
6. After completing this discussion, show students the revised Sample 1 paragraph that includes appropriate transitions.
7. Ask students to reflect on the benefits of adding in transitions.
8. Depending on the age level that this lesson is being used with, you may want to reflect on the appropriateness of the sample 1 revised paragraph's transitions. For an older group, allow them to see sample 1 revision 2.
9. Ask them to reflect on the differences in the first revision and the second. (Hopefully, they will notice that the second revision has much more sophisticated and "non cookie-cutter" transitions.
10. Emphasize that in writing, the best transitions occur naturally and are not just "picked" from a handout or list.
11. Give students the "Transitions" practice sheet to complete.

## Sample 1: What's Wrong With This Paragraph?

I have a grand time going to my brother's house for Thanksgiving. I am greeted by the sounds of my family, who are fun but a little zany. I count the minutes until we sit down and sink our teeth into a tasty meal of turkey, mashed potatoes, and stuffing. the smell of apple and pumpkin pie warming in the oven fills the air. We sit down and enjoy a football game on TV. Thanksgiving is such a blast that I count down the days until it arrives again.

## Sample 1: Revised

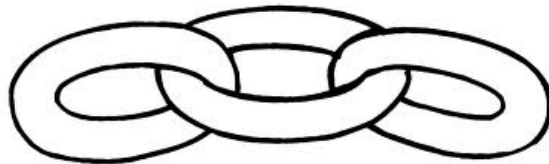
**Each year** I have a grand time going to my brother's house for Thanksgiving. **First of all,** I am greeted by the sounds of my family, who are fun but a little zany. **Also,** I count the minutes until we sit down and sink our teeth into a tasty meal of turkey, mashed potatoes, and stuffing. **Furthermore,** the smell of apple and pumpkin pie warming in the oven fills the air. **Finally,** we sit down and enjoy a football game on TV. **As you can see,** Thanksgiving is such a blast that I count down the days until it arrives again.

## Sample 1: Revision 2

**Year after year,** I have a grand time going to my brother's house for Thanksgiving. **Upon entering the house,** I am greeted by the sounds of my family, who are fun but a little zany. **Suspense-filled,** I count the minutes until we sit down and sink our teeth into a tasty meal of turkey, mashed potatoes, and stuffing. **The next part is always my favorite...**the smell of apple and pumpkin pie warming in the oven fills the air. **To wrap up a perfect day,** we sit down and enjoy a football game on TV. **Full and content, I sigh....**Thanksgiving is such a blast that I count down the days until it arrives again.

## Transitions Practice Sheet –

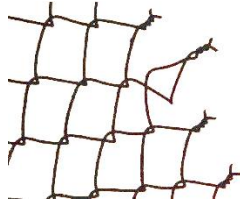
### Linking Ideas



**Directions: Read the following paragraph. Circle or underline 5 transition words or phrases.**

Kennedy Middle School is a unique place to learn. Filled with an assortment of rooms, a variety of teachers, and many organizations, the school provides many opportunities to learn. More than 60 faculty members comprise the diverse staff of our school. Organizations such as the 8th grade basketball team, student council, the drama club, ELNA, and the weather service help make our school a place loaded with opportunities. While the building itself is older – it was built in 1965 – it has many updates, including a new library, a new office, several computer labs, and a slightly refurbished auditorium. The outside looks just as interesting as the inside, complete with flowers, trees, and a variety of woods outlining the school. Without a doubt, Kennedy Middle School is a fun, exciting, and unique place to go to school.

## Transitions Practice Sheet – Linking Ideas



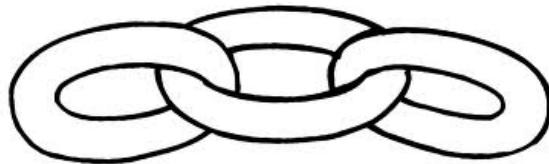
**Directions:** On your own piece of paper, please rewrite the following paragraph to include appropriate transition words and phrases.

I got up. I got dressed. I put on my black shoes. I went downstairs to eat breakfast. I ate a bowl of Cheerios because we were out of Wheaties. I read the sports page of the newspaper. A truck came barreling through the front yard and crashed into the kitchen. Nobody was hurt. I talked to the police and filled out paperwork for them and for the insurance company. I waited for a ride. I went to school.

# Transitions Practice Sheet –

## Linking Ideas

### ANSWER SHEET



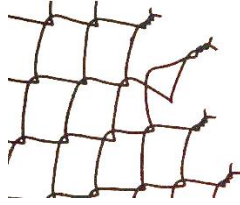
**Directions:** Read the following paragraph. Circle or underline the transitions.

Kennedy Middle School is a unique place to learn. Filled with an assortment of rooms, a variety of teachers, and many organizations, the school provides many opportunities to learn. More than 60 faculty members comprise the diverse staff of our school. Organizations such as the 8th grade basketball team, student council, the drama club, ELNA, and the weather service help make our school a place loaded with opportunities. While the building itself is older – it was built in 1965 – it has many updates, including a new library, a new office, several computer labs, and a slightly refurbished auditorium. The outside looks just as interesting as the inside, complete with flowers, trees, and a variety of woods outlining the school. Without a doubt, Kennedy Middle School is a fun, exciting, and unique place to go to school.



## Transitions Practice Sheet – Linking Ideas

**ANSWER SHEET (ANSWERS WILL VARY.)**



**Directions:** On your own piece of paper, please rewrite the following paragraph to include appropriate transition words and phrases.

To begin, I got up. Then, I got dressed before putting on my black shoes. Running downstairs, I thought about Cheerios because we were out of Wheaties. While munching happily, I read the sports page of the newspaper, when much to my surprise, a truck came barreling through the front yard and crashed into the kitchen.

Thankfully, nobody was hurt. After talking to the police and filling out paperwork for them and the insurance company, I waited for a ride, so I could go to school.

