

Writers use transitions to establish *unity* between ideas at the sentence- or paragraph-level. Transitions show how ideas connect or relate to each other and prevent abrupt or confusing shifts.

No transition between ideas: Rudolpho is incredibly tall. He does not play basketball.

A relationship between the sentences/ideas is implied here, but the nature of the relationship is unclear. When the writer connects the sentences, the relationship becomes clear. The following solution shows the connection between the two ideas:

With a transition: Rudolpho is incredibly tall; **nevertheless**, he does not play basketball.

Types of Transitions

Relationship:	Transition Words:
Addition	and, also, in addition, additionally, furthermore, moreover
Cause/Effect	for, therefore, because, since, so, thus, hence, consequently, as a result, accordingly
Contrast/Concession	but, yet, despite, however, nevertheless, nonetheless, even if, though, although, even though, while, where, whereas
Alternative/Condition	or, nor, instead, instead of, as opposed to, rather than, otherwise, on the contrary
Time	next, then, since then, when, once, until, now that, before, after, afterwards, subsequently, first, second, finally
Emphasis	in fact, indeed

Writers also use transitions to connect ideas between paragraphs. As the above example shows, transitions convey a relationship between ideas to show how they are connected. Similarly, writers can use single words or phrases from the above list as paragraph transitions.

Writers can also repeat a word or phrase from the preceding paragraph in the first sentence of a new paragraph to connect the ideas in the paragraphs. Transitions between paragraphs can also link the *known* (a past idea) to the *unknown* (a new or upcoming idea).

Such transitions can allude to or briefly summarize the preceding paragraph's main idea (the known) and give a brief highlight of the upcoming paragraph (the unknown/new). Either way, the writer reminds the reader of the previous topic and shows its relationship or connection to the new topic: Remember, **known + new**.

Examples:

The single transition word:

Most Americans see Mark Twain as a kindly humorist and a delightful “funny man.” Photographs of Twain no doubt promote this image. He appears to be the ideal grandfather, a white-thatched gentleman who embodies loving-kindness. **However**, Twain wrote some of the most savage satire ever produced by an American writer.

Repeated word or phrase:

. . . Twain appears to be the ideal grandfather, a white-thatched gentleman who embodies **loving-kindness**.

The **loving-kindness**, however, begins to look doubtful in view of some of his writing (*known*). In fact, Twain wrote some of the most savage satire ever produced by an American writer (*new*).

Repeated idea:

. . . Most Americans see Mark Twain as a kindly humorist and a delightful “funny man.”

Such a view would probably have amused the author himself (*known*), for Twain wrote some of the most savage satire ever produced by an American writer (*new*). (Allusion)

—or—

Any resemblance between **this widely held view** (*known*) and the man who reveals himself in his writing is purely imaginary; indeed, Twain wrote some of the most savage satire ever produced by an American writer (*new*). (Summary)

Remember, **known + new**.

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