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| **Transitional Words and Phrases** |

**A NOTE ON TRANSITION WORDS**

“Transition word” is just a blanket term for any word or phrase that joins ideas. Therefore, depending on what kind of word it is (subordinating conjunction, coordinating conjunction, or conjunctive adverb), the punctuation will differ.

**Examples:**

Subordinating conjunctions: although, though, since, while, because, even though  
Coordinating conjunctions: for, and, nor, but, yet, so, or  
Conjunctive adverbs: additionally, consequently, moreover, in addition, therefore

Mastering a variety of transition words—correctly—is important to writing because transitions show the relationships between ideas. They are like road signs in that they tell the reader in advance what direction you’re heading, before you’re suddenly or abruptly on a new road.

*Even when we are done doing two things at once, and we have moved on to another task, we are less efficient. Therefore, multitasking is never a good idea.*

Here are the same ideas, without transitions. Notice how the lack of transitions makes the meaning harder to grasp:

*We are done doing two things at once. We have moved on to another task. We are less efficient. Multitasking is never a good idea.*

By the same token, an essay that uses the wrong transitions misguides and confuses the reader:

*Even when we are done doing two things at once, but have moved onto another task, we are less efficient. However, multitasking is never a good idea.*

The CATW grader will be keeping an eye out for your use of transitions. However, remember not to overuse, reuse, or misuse transitions.

**TRANSITION WORDS**

Below is a list of some transitional words and phrases. Find the ones that feel most natural to you or that you like most. Try to memorize at least 10. This list does not include every possible transitional word and phrase, so you may also use ones that are not found here.

**A Short List of the Most Common Transition Words**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| consequently | first | and | otherwise |
| therefore | second | similarly | still |
| as a result | third | also | yet |
| furthermore | finally | however | for example |
| in addition | again | but | for instance |
| moreover | also | on the other hand | in fact |

**Specific Usage**

Addition: also, again, furthermore, in addition, moreover  
Consequence: accordingly, as a result, consequently, for this reason, hence, otherwise, subsequently, therefore, thus

Illustration/Example: for example, for instance, for one thing  
Emphasis: above all, more importantly, in fact  
Comparison (similarity): comparatively, likewise, similarly  
Contrast (difference): in contrast, on the other hand, however, nevertheless, yet Summarizing: after all, all in all, all things considered, by and large, in any case, in any event, in brief, in conclusion, on the whole, in short, in summary, to sum up, to summarize, finally

Restatement: in essence, in other words, namely, that is, that is to say, in short, in brief  
Sequence: first of all, to begin with, at the same time, later on, meanwhile, next, then, soon, simultaneously, afterward, in conclusion

**A useful mnemonic for remembering a handful of transitions: HOT SHOT CAT**

However, Otherwise, Therefore, Similarly, Hence, On the other hand, Then, Consequently, Also, Thus

**Transition Word Challenge**

The following lines constitute a paragraph in response to “Hype”; however, the paragraph lacks transitional words and phrases. This makes it sound choppy and, more importantly, makes it difficult for the reader to know the connection between the ideas. Your task is to use the words and phrases in the box to connect the ideas, but you can only use each word or phrase once. Remember, the lines are already in the correct order.

After you figure out the answer, rewrite the paragraph with transition words.

Hint: before you look at the transition words, decide what relationship between the ideas needs to be expressed. Also, use the punctuation to help you decide what kind of transitional word or phrase to use.

even though, while, in the same way, but, likewise, for example, however

Kalle Lasn argues that advertisements are the most “toxic of the mental pollutants.” \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, if all of these different types of advertisements are being offered to us every day, this passage makes me wonder: don’t we have a choice what “pollutants” we choose to consume? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ we can choose not to smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol, don’t we have a choice whether or not we want to pay attention to these advertisements? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ North Americans are exposed to advertisements all day long, I don’t think we’re being filled with these ads against our will. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, last night I watched *Law and Order SVU*, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ during commercial breaks, I turned off the volume and worked on my math homework. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, anytime that song for McDonald’s comes on the radio, I quickly change the station or tune it out. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Lasn has let the Oscar Myer Weiner commercial overshadow Beethoven, I for one will not allow a silly jingle to replace a song I love.

TRANSITION WORD, MEANING AND USAGE

Fill out the chart. Be sure to use different types of transition words.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Transition Word | Meaning | Write a Sentence or Two Showing How It Is Used. |
| 1. |  |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |  |
| 5. |  |  |  |
| 6. |  |  |  |
| 7. |  |  |  |
| 8. |  |  |  |