

Paragraph Transitions

For a reader to follow your thought processes, you must provide transitions that signal where you are taking your analysis next.

Transition words are used to show the reader the logical connection between sentences. Other kinds of connectors orient your reader in time or place or inform your reader that you are looking at the material from a particular point of view or perspective.

Writing Tips

You cannot write clearly if you assume too much knowledge on your reader's part. Your papers must be self-explanatory; they must follow through on an idea, consider its meaning and significance. Finally, they should reach a logical conclusion. You should not cut your discussions short; develop them! It is only in the development that the meaning of a paragraph becomes apparent.

Periods and commas are enclosed within quotation marks even if they are not part of the quoted material. Semicolons and colons should be outside quotation marks. Periods and commas come after a parenthetical citation.

When you are having trouble writing, you should talk to a friend or parent. They can: cheer you up, cheer you on, get you to say out loud what you were trying to write.

It is good to have a list of transition words floating around on the desk you are writing on. It is easier to think of transitions between paragraphs and ideas with these words next to you.

Give yourself breaks while you are writing. Some should be short – just to stand up – and some can be longer – go out and see a friend and then come back to writing. It gives you a chance to move around, and it might just give you a sense of accomplishment when you come back to the paper. Take the longer breaks once you are done with a particular section of the paper: you are rewarding yourself for a job well done.