

How do you get where you're going?

Advice for writing transitions

# What Is a Transition?

- A road sign
  - tells your reader how you're moving along
  - A way to move from A-Z
- Looking back to connect an old idea to the new one
- A way to show the direction the paper is taking
  - Linking paragraphs to paragraphs and sentences to sentences

# Why Do You Need Them ?

- Simply put,  
“Transitions are the  
bran of composition.  
They keep the flow”  
(Adam Tamashasky).

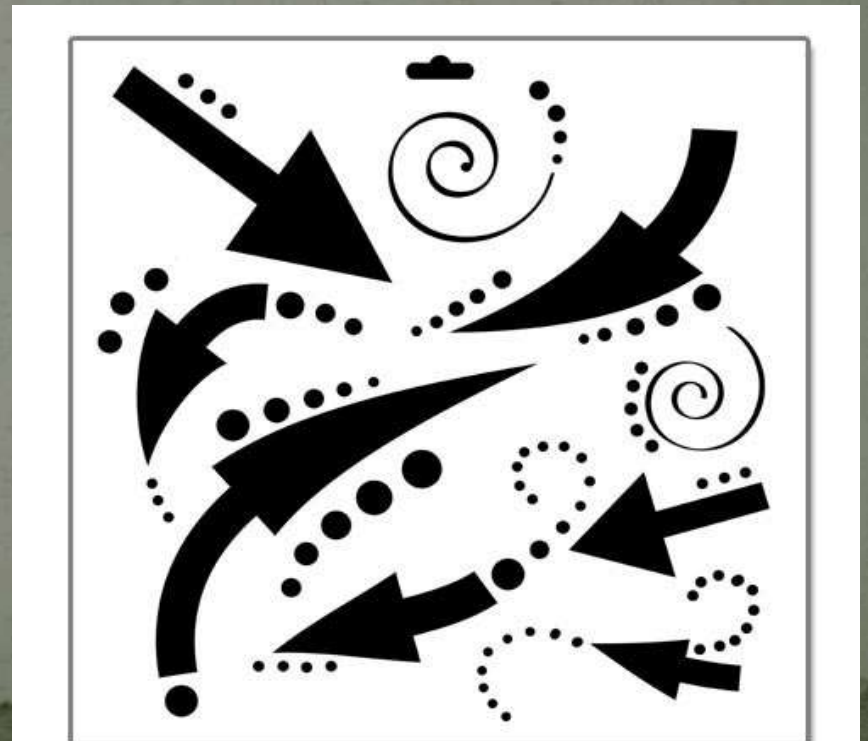


# Why Do You Need Them (cont)?

- Writing a paper is **you** making connections between things; the way you think is important.
- Your connections may make sense to you, but your thinking may not be clear to your reader.
- Transitions can give your writing immediate improvement

# Why Do You Need Them (cont.)?

- Telling the reader where you're going doesn't make your writing bland or dumbed-down, it makes your writing make sense.
- Transitions make a map that gives directions to your paper, so the reader can follow your train of thought.



# Using Transitions

- Ask, “What words, ideas, or themes connect to my next point?”
  - Once you have identified what those are, ask, “How do they relate?”
  - Then you can explain how you’re moving from point to point
  - Repeat words. It gives a sense of continuity

# An example:

The boundaries of Columbia Heights are all historic roads. Georgia Avenue, in the 1880's was used as a toll road from the central market to rural areas in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Georgia Avenue was also a partial route the Union Army used to travel to Gettysburg during the Civil War.

Sixteenth Street was envisioned by Marie Henderson to be a grand avenue. Mrs. Henderson wanted this street to be renamed the "Avenue of Presidents." She wanted busts of all the presidents to line the street. Mrs. Henderson also wanted Sixteenth Street to be the new embassy row. She was successful for a time...

- What do these two paragraphs have in common?
  - They both talk about historic streets.
- Why do these two paragraphs come next to each other?
  - They both talk about important borders in Columbia Heights.
- What is new in the second paragraph?
  - The writer introduces Mrs. Henderson.

# So how do we transition from one paragraph to the next?

- Take the old information and connect it to what the new paragraph is saying:
  - In addition to historic Georgia Ave, Sixteenth Street was made an important part of DC history and Columbia Heights, due to the work of Marie Henderson.
- This one sentence creates a bridge between the last paragraph and the significance of the new one.



# Good Linking Words to Use

- In addition
- While
- Despite
- Similarly
- Although
- However
- Moreover
- On the other hand
- Likewise
- Though
- Yet
- Nevertheless
- Consequently
- Even though

# How to Know if You're Transitioning

- Did you say how your ideas relate?  
Transitions shouldn't be implied --  
Come right out and say it!
- If you take out your transition sentences (between paragraphs) and put them into a paragraph, does your organization make sense?

# Keep in Mind:



- Transitions make your paper stronger and give it direction,
- Any good transition points back, and brings you forward at the same time.
- Nonetheless (see, a transition word!), transitions are only one tool in a writer's kit.

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