

G5 Playlist: Transitional Words, Phrases, and Clauses

Aligns with *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.3.C*:

- Use a variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses to manage the sequence of events.

Welcome

When writers are telling a narrative, it is important for the reader to understand how the sequence of events and ideas moves along in the story. In order for the reader to have a sense of time, order, and connection, writers use transitional words, phrases, and clauses that tell the reader when specific events are happening or how certain ideas are related. Many people already use these words in daily speech—for example, to give a summary of how their day was or what they did on vacation—by using words such as *later*, *next*, *however*, or *at the same time*. Without this guidance, readers may not understand the connection between events or ideas, leaving them confused. Understanding how transitional words are used, and when to use them appropriately, allows writers to tell accurate and detailed stories.

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- understand how transitional words, phrases, and clauses help develop the sequence of events.
- demonstrate shifts in time or place using transitional clauses.

Review

Key Terms

- **Transition words and phrases** can show how ideas and time are linked within a text; they help writers signal shifts in time, place, purpose, effect, or exemplification. If the phrase includes a subject and a verb, the phrase becomes a **transitional clause**.
- **Temporal words and phrases** are used to indicate the passage of time or describe the position of an event in time, usually through the form of a transitional preposition (e.g., *after*, *before*, *during*, *until*).
- A **narrative** is like telling a story—a spoken or written account of connected events. Narratives are usually personal in that they tell a story from memory or personal experience, but they can also be fictionalized, like many stories, fables, or myths throughout the history of literature.
- **Organization** refers to how a text is structured or arranged through ideas, purpose, or sequence of events.

Exploring the Standard

When writing a narrative, whether fiction or nonfiction, writers need to show the connections between ideas and events. To do so, they use transitional words, phrases, and clauses. Take a look at the following tables, which show the purposes of transitional words and phrases and examples that fit that purpose.



Time or Addition

after/afterward	before	following	since	during
from then on	then	begin	firstly, secondly...	until
finally	next	eventually	earlier/later	shortly
after that	at first/at last	at the moment	in the end	from then on
as soon as	shortly thereafter	next week/month	soon after	after a while

Place

here	beyond	there	wherever	near/nearby
opposite to	next to	neighboring on	above/below	adjacent to

Comparison and Contrast

in the same way	in like manner	by the same token	similarly	likewise
however	nonetheless	on the contrary	and yet	but
otherwise	nevertheless	in contrast	at the same time	on the other hand

Cause and Effect

therefore	consequently	accordingly	thus	hence
as a result	because (of)	for that reason	since	on account of

Choosing the right signal of shift depends on how, when, and why events actually happen in relation to other events, how ideas are connected or related, or how the writer wishes to affect the reader. Some of these words and phrases offer suspense, immediacy, comparison, or a formal sequence (first, second, last). It is up to the writer to choose how he or she will tell the story and what details to provide.

Example 1

Take a look at the following examples, which show the development of a smooth, logical paragraph by making transitional clauses. Once the word or phrase is chosen, a subject and verb is added to the sentences to create a transitional clause.

Achieving success in school is often a challenge for students. Most schools offer services created to assist students. They include peer advisers and private counseling. Schools need to provide additional services to help students succeed.

