

COHERENCE AND TRANSITION

To write successfully, you have to be able to take your readers along from one step to the next. Provide the signals that show where you are headed. A link like *for example* or *for instance* signals that you are providing an example to back up a point. A link like *therefore* or *consequently* signals that you are taking a step forward in an argument; you are drawing a conclusion from what has gone before. Signals that help the reader “move across” from one point to the next are called **transitional phrases**. They strengthen *coherence*--they help your readers see how the different parts of your paper are connected.

Here are the most common and useful transitional phrases:

Illustration:	providing an example to back up or clarify a point: <i>for example, for instance, to illustrate</i>
Addition:	continuing the same line of thought or giving additional examples: <i>too, also, furthermore, similarly, moreover.</i>
Counterpoint:	going on to an objection or counterargument: <i>however, but, nevertheless</i>
Logical Result:	drawing a logical conclusion: <i>therefore, so, consequently, as a result</i>
Contrast:	pointing out differences or opposites: <i>on the contrary, by contrast, on the other hand</i>
Concession:	admitting or conceding that an objection is true: <i>granted, admittedly, it is true that</i>
Emphasis:	reinforcing a point already made: <i>indeed, in fact, most important, above all</i>
Restatement or Summary:	<i>that is, in other words, in short, to sum up</i>

Study the following passages. At the end of the passage, write down the missing transitional phrase. Choose the phrase that seems to fit best.

1. Cheap, shoddily made handguns account for a large proportion of the homicides in the United States. _____, in Birmingham, Alabama, police estimated the cheap pistols or “Saturday-night specials” accounted for more than half of the homicides in the city.
Missing Link: _____
2. It is true that an enraged person could find other means of inflicting deadly harm if handguns were banned. _____, easy access to a cheap, convenient murder weapon certainly facilitates bloody violence.
Missing Link: _____

3. We do not allow a person to drive a car without brakes and headlights. _____, we should not allow intoxicated or enraged people to buy and carry guns.
Missing Link: _____
4. The public pays practically no attention to prison conditions or to pleas for reform as long as the prisons are calm. _____, the inmates of our federal and state penal institutions rightly conclude that rioting is the only way to call attention to their plight.
Missing Link: _____
5. The government should do everything possible to furnish needy students with student loans. _____, the loan programs. Like any government program, are sometimes abused by people who have no true need or no intention of repaying their debts. But many serious, responsible students would have to quit school if loans were not available to the.
Missing Link: _____
6. Especially in low-income neighborhoods, there is a gap between the genteel, proper, middle-class language of teachers and the language of their students, who use language shot through with four-letter words. _____, teachers from middle-class backgrounds often fail to establish true communication with their students.
Missing Link: _____
7. The earliest American colonists took the task of maintaining peace with their Indian neighbors very seriously. _____, in 1638, the authorities at Plymouth Colony executed three of the residents for the murder of a youth of the Narraganset tribe.
Missing Link: _____
8. Most of the so-called developing countries are not really “developing” if the word means catching up with either the industrialized or the oil-rich nations. _____, the gap between the poor countries and the rich countries continues to widen as the prices for both oil and industrial goods soar.
Missing Link: _____
9. The Second Amendment to the United States Constitution mentions the right to bear arms in connection with the need for a “well-regulated militia.” _____, it refers to the citizens’ right to form a well-organized and “well-regulated” citizens’ army or popular armed force.
Missing Link: _____
10. Public service in the United States is not a road to riches. Plumbers and electricians earn more money than police officers and teachers. _____, many baseball or football players are paid higher salaries than members of Congress.
Missing Link: _____