

Samples for Practice:

1. Her performance apparently failed to move or arouse the people and listeners in the phlegmatic audience, who seemed to offer in return nothing more or less than tepid and lukewarm applause, but otherwise to all visible signs that we could discern remained in a passive and unresponsive stupor.
2. In the world of today's contemporary American society, children and young people alike continue to carry on a desperate search to look for truly authentic modern heroes whom they can look up to with respect and admiration.
3. I am often stunned and taken aback by the vainglorious boasts of athletes who guarantee before a game or contest that no matter what happens during the actual event, they are sure to emerge victorious, and that whatever the outcome of the competition turns out to be, there is no chance that they can possibly come in any lower than first.
4. One question we often ask ourselves about certain people whom we come to know is whether the talents and abilities that they possess and demonstrate with such ease and facility were inborn at birth, or whether these skills and attributes were developed through study, perseverance, and hard work over the course of their lives and experiences.
5. Reading one of Agatha Christie's stories or tales of suspense and mystery usually, in fact, very often leaves me bewildered and totally perplexed because of the incredible number of hints, clues, and red herrings that she purposefully drops carefully but casually into the narrative to confuse and puzzle the readers in her audience so as to lead them astray down the garden path about what the actual outcome of the adventure will or will not be in the end, when everything is tied together and wrapped up neatly in an orderly and clear explanation that reveals the truth of exactly what has just occurred and taken place before our very eyes in the book that we have been reading.

5. USE TRANSITIONS TO
LINK SENTENCES AND IDEAS

Imagine that each sentence of your work is a pearl. Transitions form the string that links those pearls.

Or imagine that each sentence is a short path. Transitions are the signposts that guide your reader on the overall journey.

Or imagine that . . . you get the idea.

Some transitions suggest evidence, of which you can never have too much:

For example

For instance

First (or second or third)

Consider

Some suggest similarity or contrast:

Likewise

Similarly

Furthermore

However

Nevertheless

On the other hand

To the contrary

Some suggest confirmation:

Moreover

In addition

Indeed

Equally important

Some suggest restatement:

In other words

To put the matter differently

In brief

Some suggest conclusion:

Hence

Therefore

In sum

Thus

Consequently

Transitions provide readers with the security of knowing that you are in control of the material. They also help you, the author, because if you can't find an appropriate transition, your ideas may not be as coherent as you presume.

Samples for Practice:

1. I believe that W. C. Fields is the funniest man who has ever lived. *The Bank Dick* and *It's a Gift* are two of my favorite movies. I respect the judgment of anyone who agrees with me. Those who reject this opinion always drop in my estimation.
2. When I go to a party, people always seem to talk about travel or cooking. I know nothing about either subject. I don't say anything. I don't go to parties.
3. Harry loved to watch television. He could watch all day. He could simply sit and stare at that box. His business associate, Sam, had no patience for such wasting of time. He actually did the work.
4. Romeo rarely thinks before he acts or talks. He races from one situation to another. He never has a plan that he follows. He is not nearly as intelligent as Juliet.
5. When you learn to drive, you have to keep a lot of rules in mind. You have to drive defensively and watch out for mistakes that other drivers might make. You have to be careful of pedestrians who don't look where they're walking. Too many beginning drivers are concerned only with getting there fast.

6. VARY SENTENCE STRUCTURE

All of us have heard speakers who talk in a monotone or relentless rhythm. Their ideas may be interesting, but the dull presentation crushes audience response. The same phenomenon occurs in writing.

We're not speaking of suspense fiction, where short, terse sentences may create tension:

He walked up the stairs. The floor creaked. He felt for the doorknob.

It was cold. He turned it. The door slowly opened.

The light revealed a sight too horrible for words.

In nonfiction, however, such style becomes numbing, so you want to vary your tone. For instance, you may write:

We arrived at the lake early, and the fish were already jumping.

The example contains two coordinate clauses, a legitimate structure, but the combination of a subordinate clause and a main clause may be an intriguing variation:

When we arrived at the lake early, the fish were already jumping.

Sometimes an introductory phrase works:

Arriving early, we saw that the fish were already jumping.

Or an unexpected question:

We arrived at six in the morning. What would we do first?

You can also combine sentences to make the construction longer:

When we arrived early, the fish were already jumping, so we took out our rods, scurried into the boat, and began the serious work of the day.

In lengthening, however, beware of running on forever:

What we noticed first when we arrived was the fish, already jumping, leaping, so near our boat that we, free from the pressures of the