

Connections

Lesson Objective	(Drafting) Students will identify a transition sentence that connects the main ideas of consecutive paragraphs.	
Vocabulary	transition sentence: a sentence that connects two paragraphs by joining the main idea of one paragraph with the main idea of the next paragraph	
Reviewed Vocabulary	main idea, gist	
Instructional Materials	Teacher	Student
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Masters • Timer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Booklet

Preview

Writers organize their thoughts into paragraphs by topic. In order to help readers follow their ideas, authors connect paragraphs using transition sentences. A transition sentence is a sentence that connects two paragraphs by joining the main idea of one paragraph with the main idea of the next paragraph. Today you will learn to identify transition sentences in compositions, so that you will eventually be able to use them in your own writing.

Engage Prior/Informal Knowledge

Teacher Note

Before beginning this lesson, students must have some skill with summarizing, or identifying the main idea of, a paragraph. If you have taught the “Get the Gist” (finding the main idea) lesson of the Reading Module, you may substitute the term *gist* for *main idea*. If your students do not know the term *gist*, have them cross through the term in their student packets.

1. Students complete a silent warm-up to review what they already know about finding the main idea.

Teacher Note

There are two Silent Warm-up options: SB#1 using “main idea” language, and SB#2 using “Get the Gist” language. Use the main idea warm-up unless you have taught the “Get the Gist” lesson of the Reading Module.

Distribute the *SB#1: Engage Prior Knowledge—Main Idea Silent Warm-up* or the *SB#2: Engage Prior Knowledge—Get the Gist Silent*

Warm-up. Allow students 3 minutes to read the passages and complete the assignment.

2. Review the silent warm-up.

When 3 minutes have passed, have students share responses.

What must a good main idea (gist) tell us? (*the “who” or “what,” and the most important information about the “who” or “what”*)

What is the most important *who* or *what* in the first paragraph? (*children and music*)

What is the most important information about that *who* or *what*? (*Music can help children learn.*)

What is the most important *who* or *what* in the second paragraph? (*music, children, or the children’s regular activities*)

In the second paragraph, what is the most important information about that *who* or *what*? (*Music can be taught while children do their regular activities.*)

Demonstrate

Introduce transition sentences.

Today you will identify a transition sentence that connects the main idea of consecutive paragraphs. A transition sentence is a sentence that connects two paragraphs by joining the main idea of one paragraph with the main idea of the next paragraph. Before you can identify a transition sentence, you must be able to identify the main idea (gist) of a paragraph. Now I will show you how to use the three directions on your paper to identify a transition sentence.

Display the *TM#1: Demonstrate—Transition Sentences*.

Direction #1 says that we must “read and find the main idea (gist) of each paragraph, and write it in the first column.” Remember that a good main idea tells us the *who* or *what*, and the most important information about the *who* or *what*.

These two paragraphs each have a different main idea. Both paragraphs are about music and children. But the main idea of the first paragraph is that music can help children learn. The main idea of the second paragraph is that music can be taught while children do their regular activities.

Direction #2 says to “reread the last sentences of the first paragraph and the first sentence of the second paragraph.” Writers connect different main ideas by including transition sentences, usually at the end of the first paragraph or the beginning of the second, which is why we need to reread. As we read, we should be looking for words that connect the main idea of one paragraph to the other.

Look at the last sentence of the first paragraph. It is only about music helping children learn, but doesn’t tell me anything about how to teach music or about children’s regular activities, the main idea of the second paragraph.

Now look at the first sentence of the second paragraph, which is underlined. This is a transition sentence. It contains words that remind me of the previous paragraph and connect the ideas from both paragraphs.

Direction #3 says to “circle the words that connect to the main idea (gist) of the other paragraph.” On this paper, words are circled that connect to the main idea of the first paragraph, that music can help children learn. The circled words are *can make learning easier*. Because those words connect the main ideas of both paragraphs, this is my transition sentence.

Practice

1. With class input, practice identifying a transition sentence.

Teacher Note

If your students have completed the Get the Gist lesson in the Reading Module, substitute the term *gist*. If your students do not know the term *gist*, have them cross through the term in their student packets.

Display the *TM#2: Practice—Transition Sentences (Part 1)*. Direct students' attention to their copies. Read the two paragraphs aloud.

We are going to identify the transition sentence that connects these two paragraphs. In order to find the transition sentence, we need to first follow Direction #1 and find the main idea (gist) of the two paragraphs.

What is the most important *who* or *what* in the first paragraph? (*Nicki*)

What is the most important information about that *who* or *what*? (*Nicki can't stay at her university or find a job.*)

So the main idea (gist) is, "Nicki can't stay at her university or find a job."

Write "Nicki can't stay at her university or find a job" in the margin under "Main idea (gist) of each paragraph," next to the first paragraph. Have students do the same on their copy.

What is the most important *who* or *what* in the second paragraph? (*people who aren't working or in school*)

What is the most important information about that *who* or *what*? (*They aren't taken seriously by employers.*)

So the main idea (gist) is, "A person not working or in school isn't taken seriously by employers."

Write “A person not working or in school isn’t taken seriously by employers” in the margin under “Main idea (gist) of each paragraph,” next to the second paragraph. Have students do the same on their copy.

Direction #2 tells us to reread the last sentence of the first paragraph. Are there words in this sentence that connect to the main idea of the second paragraph, that “a person not working or in school isn’t taken seriously by employers”? (yes) What are they? (closed even more doors to people like her) Circle those words on your paper.

On the display, circle student responses.

The words “closed even more doors to people like her” introduce the main idea of the second paragraph because the main idea of the second paragraph is about people—like Nicki—who aren’t working or in school. The words “closed even more doors” in the first paragraph connect to the idea “employers just do not take you seriously” in the second paragraph. The words “people like her” in the first paragraph connect to the idea of “a person who is not working, in training or in college.” The last sentence of the first paragraph is a transition sentence, so we underline it.

2. Practice identifying transition sentences in pairs. Display *TM#4: Practice—Transition Sentences (Part 2)*.

Now you will work in pairs to complete the three directions on your paper in order to be able to identify the transition sentence. You will have 5 minutes to identify the main idea (gist), circle words that connect to the main idea (gist) of the other paragraph, and underline the transition sentence.

Have students restate the instructions and check for understanding. Set the timer for 5 minutes.

Circulate among the students, check for understanding, and provide corrective feedback as needed.

When 5 minutes have passed, stop students.

3. Review student responses.

Display *TM#4: Practice—Transition Sentences (Part 2)*.

Direction #1 says to “read and find the main idea (gist) of each paragraph, and write it in the first column.” **What is the main idea of the first paragraph?** *(Some celebrities use specific brands in their videos or movies.)*

What is the main idea of the second paragraph? *(Advertisers use videos and movies to advertise to consumers.)*

Direction #2 says to “reread the last sentences of the first paragraph and the first sentence of the second paragraph.” **Reread the last sentence of the first paragraph. Are there words in this sentence that connect to the main idea of the second paragraph?** *(no)*

Reread the first sentence of the last paragraph. Are there words in this sentence that connect to the main idea of the first paragraph? *(yes)* **What are they?** *(this advertising, these products)*

These words connect the main ideas of both paragraphs. What does direction #3 say to do? *(Circle the words that connect to the main idea [gist], and underline the transition sentence.)* **The words “this advertising” and “these products” refer back to the specific examples of celebrities using brands in their videos and movies. You should have circled “this advertising” and “these products” and underlined the sentence.**

How do we know this is the transition sentence? *(The words “this advertising” and “these products” connect the specific examples to the main idea of the second paragraph, that advertisers use videos and movies to advertise to consumers.)*

Teacher Note

Students may need additional opportunities for practice before working independently.

Independent Practice

1. Have students complete the *SB#5: Independent Practice*.
2. Collect the materials, score the work, and check for mastery.

Teacher Note

As an extension of this lesson, prepare copies of paragraphs in which the transition sentence has been removed. Create multiple-choice questions in which students select from among the removed transition sentence and other choices that only relate to the main idea of one of the two paragraphs.