Connecting the Ideas Within Your Essay

One of the biggest problems seen in essays is the lack of flow between ideas.  That is, the writing seems choppy.  Because, essentially, each paragraph in an essay deals with its own topic, the paragraphs don’t connect easily and ideas may be difficult to follow.  A writer needs to help the reader follow along by using signal words, or ***transitions***.

**Transitions** are words or phrases that link one idea to the next; they are signals which help the reader follow your thoughts.  Transitions are used to connect ideas within paragraphs and when leading from one paragraph to the next.

Transitions fall into several categories.  The following seven categories list transitions for some of the most common situations in writing:

 1.  *To show a time relationship:*  first, second, third, next, before, during, after, now, then, finally, last.   
 2.  *To add an idea or example*:  in addition, also, another, furthermore, similarly, for example, for instance.   
 3.  *To show contrast*:  although, but, however, instead, nevertheless, on the other hand, in contrast, on the contrary.   
 4.  *To show comparison*:  in the same way, similarly, likewise, as, also.   
 5.  *To show cause-effect*:  as a result, consequently, because, since, therefore, thus.   
 6.  *To show conclusion*:  as a result, therefore, finally, last, in conclusion, in summary, to sum up, all in all.   
 7.  *To clarify*:  in other words, for instance, that is, put another way.

# Your Task

Review your essay completed and add transitions where necessary.