

Lesson 7 — Writing and Linking Support Paragraphs

Exercise 2 Types of Transitional Links

The way you link ideas within a paragraph depends in part on the kind of question you are answering. For example, if the question asks you to compare and contrast two developments or trends, you will use transitional phrases that point out similarities and differences. A question about when various trends or events occurred calls for transitional phrases linking events over time.

For this two-page lesson you will work with four separate paragraphs. The paragraphs are not related to one another. Each paragraph links its ideas in a different way, identified as, "Chronological," "Cause and Effect," "Order of Importance" or "Compare and Contrast." These terms are explained in each box below, along with some typical transitional phrases of that type. Each sample paragraph has blank spaces where transitional words or phrases should go. Complete these paragraphs. As a class, discuss how transitional words help make clear the different kinds of reasoning in each paragraph.

1. Chronological

Having to do with the order of events over time. Use a chronological organization when you need to describe changes over time carefully.

Examples: *At first, ... Next, ... Then last ...*
 For years, ... After that ... And then...
 Beginning with ... Then came ... This finally led to ...

Complete the Transitions in the Sample Paragraph Below: You may use the transitional phrases in this box, alter them or use any others that seem to work.

Sample Paragraph 1 (Chronological)

_____ World War I shattered the faith and weakened the will of the European powers to hold onto their huge colonial empires. _____ a new generation of nationalist leaders appeared calling for greater independence for the colonies. _____ World War II again left Europe in ruins. It was this great upheaval that truly marked the beginning of the end of the colonial era.

2. Cause and Effect

When you want to focus on the factors explaining an event or trend, especially with "explain why" or "assess the validity" questions.

Examples: *One factor explaining ... Then there was ... Also ...*
 To begin with ... Also ... Together, all these factors ...
 At first ... Adding to this factor was ... Finally ...

Complete the Transitions in the Sample Paragraph Below: You may use the transitional phrases in this box, alter them or use any others that seem to work.

Sample Paragraph 2 (Cause and Effect)

_____ the collapse of the colonial empires in the two decades after World War II. _____ was the rise of a new generation of nationalist leaders in the colonies — men such as Nehru, Nkrumah, Ho Chi Minh, Jomo Kenyatta and others who inspired masses of people. _____ the fact that the European powers were exhausted and drastically weakened by two devastating world wars in the space of 30 years. _____ the Cold War, which locked the West into a long confrontation with the Soviet Union. This enabled the new generation of nationalist leaders in the colonies to play off one side against another and gain leverage over both.

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Exercise 2 (Continued) Types of Transitional Links

3. Order of Importance

From the most to the least important factors that explain something (or the least to the most important factors). Most useful with “explain why” question types.

Examples: *The most important factor ... Also significant ... Then finally...
First of all ... Another factor ... Also ... As a result, ...
For one thing ... More importantly ... But most of all ...*

Complete the Transitions in the Sample Paragraph Below: You may use the transitional phrases in this box, alter them or use any others that seem to work.

Sample Paragraph 3 (Order of Importance)

Decolonization in Africa did not lead smoothly to the creation of stable democratic nations, as many hoped it would. Why not? _____ was the lack of any real sense of national identity within many of the new nations. Tribal rivalries created enormous tensions in them from the start. _____ tiny educated elites from each tribal group were the only ones able to understand and use the instruments of political power. Most Africans had little idea of how to make their political will known. _____ was the rise of powerful armies and the lack of strong political or legal institutions to restrain them. _____ by the 1970s, one-party governments and military coups had become an all-too common feature of life in Africa.

4. Compare and Contrast

Use this organization to describe similarities and differences in two separate historical events or trends. It can also be useful with “assess the validity” questions when you agree partly with the DBQ statement but also want to make some qualifications.

Examples: *On the one hand ... On the other hand ...
For one thing ... Moreover ... However ... Finally ...
It is true that ... But nevertheless ... Also ...*

Complete the Transitions in the Sample Paragraph: You may use the transitional phrases in this box, alter them or use any others that seem to work.

Sample Paragraph 4 (Compare and Contrast)

Europe's colonial empires collapsed rapidly after World War II. Then, in the 1980s, the huge Soviet empire also fell apart. In what ways were these two great historical changes alike and not alike? _____ they were alike in that rulers of one nationality took control of entirely different nationalities. _____ this control took a form in which the colonized people lacked independent political power. _____ in both forms of empire, collapse came after the rulers themselves had lost confidence in their right or ability to rule. This fueled growing protests that in time could not be held in check. _____ the differences between the Soviet communist empire and those of Western Europe are at least as great as their similarities. In the Western empires, traditions of parliamentary democracy and civil liberties in time did give colonized people a growing voice in their own destiny. This was never really so in Eastern Europe. _____ communist ideas and practices differed drastically from Western notions of cultural superiority and faith in private economic markets. Both systems kept colonized people down. But the communist systems were much more thorough in their oppressiveness and harder to oppose, at least for a while.