

Grades 11–12 Playlist: Clarifying Relationships Using Words, Phrases, and Clauses

Aligns with CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.1.C:

- Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

Welcome

“Smartphones have become a major part of American life because they keep everybody connected, although some people think that smartphones have done more bad than good since they have isolated their users from society.” When the reader goes over this sentence, he or she may understand that these sentences are connected, but he or she may not understand all the specifics, such as that the last part of a sentence is a counterclaim to the first part. Also, this sentence is long and wordy. Fortunately, the potential for confusion can be avoided by adding a few extra words and phrases to clarify these relationships! In addition, by changing the syntax, wordiness can be eliminated.

Now read the following revision: “Smartphones have become a major part of American life due to the fact that they keep everybody connected. On another note, some people think that smartphones have done more bad than good, citing that they have isolated their users from society.” What makes this statement more readable than the first?

Watch!

Watch the following video to learn exactly how important transitions can be in connecting thoughts and ideas.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3OZn29K93s>

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- use words, phrases, clauses, and varied syntax to link the major sections of the text and create cohesion.
- clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

Review

Key Terms

- A **claim** is a statement that clearly expresses a writer’s opinion or perspective about an idea or topic. A **counterclaim** is a statement that disagrees with the original claim.
- A **reason** is an explanation for why the claim should be believed. **Evidence** is information that validates, or supports this reason.



- **Cohesion** is the unity in a text or speech that is achieved when all of its elements are appropriately and logically connected.
- **Syntax** involves the way words and phrases are arranged in a text. This includes the types of words and phrases used (adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, etc.).

Transition words and phrases are important to a text because they act as guides, directing the reader from one point to the next. They make the text easier to read and to understand because they show how ideas are connected. They also help to answer questions such as the following:

- Is this a reason why someone should believe this claim?
- How does this evidence support this reason?
- How does this counterclaim oppose this claim?

Type of Transition	Word/phrase	Usage
Additive	Besides... Furthermore... In addition...	Radium, a very dangerous radioactive element, is occasionally used in cancer treatments. In addition, it was once added to paints used on watch dials.
Cause and effect	As a result... Consequently... Due to...	Donald sprained his ankle after falling down a flight of stairs. As a result, he did not participate in the 5K charity run on Saturday.
Chronological order	Finally... First of all... Secondly...	First, German U-boats sank the RMS <i>Lusitania</i> . Second, the Zimmermann Telegram was intercepted. Finally, the United States entered World War I.
Contrast	But... However... On the other hand...	The smallest snails can fit through the eye of a sewing needle. However, there are some species of aquatic snails that are over a foot long.
Emphatic	Above all... Irrefutably... Most importantly...	There are several things that we will need to take to the beach with us. Most importantly, we must remember our suitcases.

