

## G11–12 Playlist: Using Transitions and Syntax to Create Cohesion and Clarity

*Aligns with CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2.C:*

- Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

### Welcome

Imagine watching a movie with a complex plot. Maybe certain scenes don't follow what came before them, or maybe a line of dialogue sounded out of character coming from the person who said it. It can be a frustrating experience for the viewer when ideas are not clearly conveyed. The same is true when reading. Informational texts, like essays and articles, often present multiple ideas or concepts. To help the reader follow one idea to the next, writers use transitions to link sentences or sections of a text. They also vary their syntax so that the related ideas and the transitions between them do not sound the same. When writers use a variety of appropriate transitions and syntax, the text is transformed from a disconnected series of thoughts into a cohesive, or unified, whole.

### Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn how to:

- use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link parts of a text.
- use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to create cohesion and clarify relationships.

### Review

#### Key Terms

- In writing, **cohesion** is the use of transitional phrases and other devices to guide readers through a text and to show how ideas and concepts are related.
- **Transitions** are words and phrases that provide connections and clarify the different relationships between ideas, sentences, and paragraphs.
- **Syntax** is the arrangement of words and phrases that a writer uses to make meaningful, well-formed sentences.

### Exploring the Standard

Because writers strive to convey information clearly and concisely, transitions are essential in a text. Writers can express transitions in many ways, depending on the logical connection that they want to establish between one or more parts of a text. Another way to ensure clear and concise writing is to pay close attention to syntax. Using the same sentence pattern over and over can become repetitive for the reader. Furthermore, if too many ideas are expressed in similar ways, then the reader will begin to see them as the same, even if they are quite different. By including transitions and looking for opportunities to vary syntax, writers are able to guide their readers through a text one idea at a time.



**Watch!**

Watch the following video to gain a basic understanding of transitions:

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

**A Closer Look: Transition Words and Phrases**

When crafting a transition, writers must first determine the relationship between their ideas. This will help them decide which transition word or phrase best clarifies the connection for the reader. Read the following chart, which shows common transition words and phrases and their uses.

Function	Transition Words and Phrases
To show similarity, comparison, or agreement between ideas or concepts	like, similarly, as/same as, coupled with, by the same token, most, mostly, comparable, equally, identically, by comparison, comparatively, likewise, correspondingly
To show contrast, or difference, between ideas or concepts	in contrast, on the contrary, unlike, different from, while, in spite of, after all, in reality, however, opposite, on the other hand, otherwise, conversely, nonetheless, notwithstanding, despite, rather, instead
To show consequence, result, or effect	as a result, with this in mind, in that case, in view of, so as to, due to, whenever, since, therefore, because, in effect, thus, if... then, so that, in order to, due to the fact that, accordingly, subsequently, afterward
To show time or sequence	first/second/third, then, next, after, at last, before
To add to the previous point or to introduce a new one	furthermore, besides, another, moreover, next, first/second/third, in addition, first of all
To concede a point	although, at least, at any rate
To emphasize a point	indeed, above all, truly, in fact
To bring attention to details	especially, specifically, in particular
To illustrate a point or provide examples	for instance, for example, to illustrate
To sum up the points in an essay or make a conclusion	finally, therefore, consequently, the answer, in conclusion, in the end, as can be seen, given this, by and large, ultimately, after all

**A Closer Look: Using Transitions and Varied Syntax**

Effective writing presents and connects ideas in a clear, logical manner. When used appropriately, transition words help achieve this goal. Transitions clarify connections for the reader and make a text more cohesive. This is why it is important to deliberately and effectively choose where to include a transition word and how to use it. For example, varying transition words and phrases in a piece of writing helps to keep the text from feeling repetitive. Instead of repeating the same words for every transition, take advantage of the many different ways to signal a change in focus.

