Transitions

By intentionally organizing your paper, you can demonstrate how your ideas connect. Transitional phrases can help your readers understand the flow of your ideas by telling how the ideas relate to each other on a sentence level. The following are examples of transition words.

Comparison

again
also
in the same way
likewise
once more
similarly

Concession

although it is true that
granted that
I admit that
naturally
of course

Repetition

as mentioned earlier
as mentioned above
to repeat an earlier point
to emphasize
in other words

Contrast

although
however
instead
to contrast
nevertheless
on the other hand
regardless
still

Example

after all
even
for example
for instance
indeed
in fact
of course
specifically
such as

Summary/Conclusion

as a result
as we have seen
in conclusion
in short
therefore
to summarize

Time

after a while
afterward
before
as soon as
earlier
immediately
in the meantime
meanwhile
presently
since
so far

Place

above
adjacent to
below
beyond
closer to
elsewhere
far
here
near
nearby
opposite
there

Sequence

again
also
and
and then
besides
finally
first
second
third
furthermore
last
moreover
next
still

Cause & Effect

accordingly
as a result
because
consequentially
for this purpose
hence
so
then
therefore
thus
to this end

Topic Sentences

A topic sentence is the first sentence of each paragraph. Topic sentences serve several important functions.

Example thesis:
Allen Shanley's groundbreaking work in memory can be seen through his multifaceted Theory of Sport-Recall Mechanisms, which examines the use of environmental stressors and personal attachment, and through his controversial Law of Statistics that reexamines how numbers are processed by the brain.

They **show** the reader how each paragraph connects to the thesis.

Arguably the most important aspect of Shanley's memory research is his Theory of Sport-Recall Mechanisms—a **complicated system of factors** that underlies how sports fans process detached statistics and facts.

This topic sentence tells the reader how the paragraph relates to the thesis by referring to Shanley's Theory of Sports-Recall Mechanisms. Notice that even little details can be important, such as the use of "complicated system of factors" in the topic sentence to match "multifaceted theory" in the thesis.

If the topic sentence does not seem to have any connection to what is stated in the thesis, you either need to edit your thesis or reconsider the direction of this specific paragraph.

They **introduce** the reader to the content/topic of the paragraph.

One way to understand Shanley's Theory of Sport-Recall Mechanisms is to examine how he explains the use of stressors in trivia games such as *Scene It*.

Thanks to the topic sentence, the reader now knows that you are going to continue explaining Shanley's theory by summarizing his research on trivia games.

This also gives you a blueprint for writing the paragraph because it focuses your thinking: anything other than Shanley's theory or his studies on trivia games should be moved to another paragraph.

They **demonstrate** how each paragraph fits into your argument's structure.

Even though <u>most neurobiologists find Shanley's Law of Statistics to be unfounded,</u> **the model possesses several redeeming qualities.**

transitional phrase

<u>previous paragraph</u>

new paragraph

An easy way to transition is to mention the topic of the previous paragraph and then explicitly state its relationship to the topic of the current paragraph.

<u>Such stressors,</u> *however,* can only be understood in the context of **the relationship between humans and facts.**

<u>previous paragraph</u>
transitional phrase

new paragraph

Since the last paragraph was about stressors, you need to write out the connection between that topic and the topic of your current paragraph: the relationship between humans and facts.

If your audience can reconstruct your argument just by looking at the topic sentences, then congratulations! You have solid transitions.