Transitions

Certain words and phrases signal connections between ideas, connections that might otherwise be missed. A good writer shows the reader how his/her ideas fit together (what we call coherence) and the development of his/her thesis and claims through frequent signaling or transitions. Transitions can help the reader move with ease from sentence to sentence and from one paragraph to the next. Commonly used transitions are included in the following list.

To Show Addition:
and, also, besides, further, furthermore, in addition, moreover, next, too, first, second

To Give Examples:
For example, for instance, to illustrate, in fact, specifically

To Compare:
also, in the same manner, similarly, likewise

To Contrast:
but, however, on the other hand, in contrast, nevertheless, still, even though, on the contrary, yet, although

To Summarize or Conclude:
in other words, in short, in summary, in conclusion, to sum up, that is, therefore

To Show Time:
after, as, before, next, during, later, finally, meanwhile, then, when, while, immediately

To Show Place or Direction:
above, below, beyond, farther on, nearby, opposite, close, to the left

To Indicate Logical Relations:
if, so, therefore, consequently, thus, as a result, for this reason, since

Excerpt from Stephen Jay Gould’s “Were Dinosaurs Dumb?”

“I don’t wish to deny that the flattened, minuscule head of the large bodied ‘Stegosaurus’ houses little brain from our subjective, top-heavy perspective, but I do wish to assert that we should not expect more of the beast. First of all, large animals have relatively smaller brain than related, small animals. The correlation of brain size with body size among kindred animals (all reptiles, all mammals, for example) is remarkably regular. As we move from small to large animals, from mice to elephants or small lizards to Komodo dragons, brain size increases, but not so fast as body size. In other words, bodies grow faster than brains, and large animals have low ratios of brain weight to body weight. In fact, brains grow only about two-thirds as fast as bodies. Since we have no reasons to believe that large animals are consistently stupider than their smaller relatives, we must conclude that large animals require relatively less brain to do as well as smaller
animals. If we do not recognize this relationship, we are likely to underestimate the mental power of very large animals, dinosaurs in particular.”

Excerpt from Caroline Bird’s “College is a Waste of Time and Money” in The Case Against College, 1975.

“The psychic income of these and other occupations popular with students is so high that these jobs can be filled without offering high salaries. According to one study, 93 percent of urban university professors would choose the same vocation again if they had the chance, compared with only 16 percent of unskilled auto workers. __________ the monetary gap between college professor and auto worker is ________ surprisingly small, the difference in psychic income is enormous. ______________ colleges fail to warn students that jobs of these kinds are hard to come by, even for qualified applicants, ______ they rarely accept the responsibility of helping students choose a career that will lead to a job. When a young person says he is interested in helping people, his counselor tells him to become a psychologist. ___________ jobs in psychology are scarce. The Department of Labor, __________ estimates there will be 4,300 new jobs for psychologist in 1975 ________ colleges are expected to turn out 58,430 B.A.s in psychology that year.