

## Process Analysis: Using Transitions for Better Coherence

Every composition should have **coherence**. A paragraph *coheres*—holds together—when the sentences are arranged in a clear, logical order and when the sentences are related like links in a chain.

An orderly presentation of ideas within the paragraph is easier to follow and more pleasant to read than a jumble. After jotting down ideas but before writing the paragraph, the writer should decide which ideas to discuss first, which second, which third, and so on, according to a logical order.

There are many possible orders, depending on the subject and the writer's purpose. This workshop will explain four basic ways of ordering ideas: **time order, space order, listing and classification**.

### Time Order Pattern

One of the most common methods of ordering sentences in a paragraph is through **time or chronological order**, which moves from present to past or from past to present. Most stories, histories, and instructions follow the logical order of time.

**Transitions used in the time order pattern:**

<b>after</b>	<b>during</b>	<b>later</b>	<b>previously</b>	<b>ultimately</b>
<b>afterward</b>	<b>eventually</b>	<b>meanwhile</b>	<b>second</b>	<b>when</b>
<b>as</b>	<b>finally</b>	<b>next</b>	<b>since</b>	<b>until</b>
<b>before</b>	<b>first</b>	<b>now</b>	<b>soon</b>	<b>while</b>
<b>currently</b>	<b>last</b>	<b>often</b>	<b>then</b>	

Determine the logical time order of the following sentences, numbering the sentences 1, 2, 3, and so on, as if you were preparing to write a paragraph. Circle the time transition words.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Eventually, his passion for learning earned him a master's degree and a doctorate.

\_\_\_\_\_ During those early years as a teacher, he found that the more he learned, the more excited he was about teaching, and he loved studying under the guidance of professional teachers.

\_\_\_\_\_ His first notions of wanting only a four-year bachelor's degree were quickly dispelled.

\_\_\_\_\_ When Corbin decided to become a teacher, he had no idea that he was deciding to become a career student.
- \_\_\_\_\_ First, lie down with your knees comfortably bent.

\_\_\_\_\_ Next, put your hands at your sides or fold them over your chest.

\_\_\_\_\_ Finally, focus on your abs and do your crunches slowly, three sets of ten each.

\_\_\_\_\_ Lift your torso until the shoulder blades leave the floor, and then slowly roll back down.

\_\_\_\_\_ The perfect crunch should be done slowly and deliberately, working the whole abdominal wall.

The following paragraph uses the time order pattern for process to organize ideas. Circle the time order transition words.

1. To ensure proper interdental cleaning, floss each day. 2. First, break off about 18 inches of floss and wind most of it around one of your middle fingers. 3. Second, wind the remaining floss around the same finger of the opposite hand. 4. This finger will take up the floss as it becomes dirty. 5. Third, hold the floss tightly between your thumbs and forefingers. 6. Next, guide the floss between your teeth using a gentle rubbing motion: never snap the floss into the gums. 7. When the floss reaches the gum line, curve it into a C shape against one tooth. 8. As you hold the floss tightly against the tooth, gently rub the side of the tooth, moving the floss away from the gum with up-and-down motions. 9. Continue this method on the rest of your teeth. 10. Finally, don't forget to floss the back side of your last tooth.

### Space Order Pattern

Another useful way to arrange ideas in writing is through space order—describing a person, a thing, or a place from top to bottom, from left to right, from foreground to background, and so on. Space order is often used in descriptive writing because it moves from detail to detail like a movie camera's eye.

Transitions used in space order:

above	at the side	behind	by	farther	left	right
across	at the top	below	center	front	middle	there
adjacent	back	beneath	close to	here	next to	under
around	at the side	beside	down	in	nearby	underneath
at the bottom	backup	beyond	far away	inside	outside	within

Below are topic sentences followed by supporting details. Arrange each group of details according to space order, numbering them 1, 2, 3, and so on, as if you were preparing to write a descriptive paragraph. On the line after each topic sentence, tell what kind of space order you used: left to right, back to front, and so forth.

1. Describe a firefighter's uniform. \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ fire-retardant pants called "turnouts"
- \_\_\_\_\_ black, hard plastic helmet with a flashlight attached
- \_\_\_\_\_ steel-reinforced black rubber bunker boots
- \_\_\_\_\_ bright yellow, fireproof Kevlar jacket
- \_\_\_\_\_ compressed-air face mask

2. Describe the security measure protecting the original Declaration of Independence. \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ room's perimeter ringed with security cameras and motion sensors
- \_\_\_\_\_ two armed guards standing next to the bronze and marble shrine
- \_\_\_\_\_ the National Archives building in Washington, D.C.
- \_\_\_\_\_ parchment of document touched only by decay-preventing helium gas
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bulletproof glass case

Choose a word from the box to fill in each blank with a transition that shows the relationship between ideas. Use each word once.

**at   end   in   inward   surrounded**

### Structure of Skeletal Muscle

Skeletal muscle fiber is a single muscle cell shaped like a tube. An individual muscle may be made up of hundreds, or even thousands of muscle fibers bundled together and wrapped 1. \_\_\_\_\_ a connective tissue covering. Each muscle is 2. \_\_\_\_\_ by a connective tissue sheath called the epimysium. Portions of the epimysium project 3. \_\_\_\_\_ to divide the muscle into compartments. Connective tissue outside the epimysium is called fascia, and it surrounds and separates the muscles. Typically, a muscle spans a joint and is attached to bones by tendons 4. \_\_\_\_\_ both ends. One of the bones remains relatively fixed or stable; the 5. \_\_\_\_\_ of the other bone moves as a result of muscle contraction.

### Listing Pattern

Often, authors want to list a series or set of reasons, details, or points. These details are listed in an order that the author has chosen. Changing the order of the details does not change their meaning. Transitions of addition, such as *and*, *also* and *furthermore* are generally used to indicate a listing pattern.

#### Addition transitions used in the listing pattern:

<b>also</b>	<b>final</b>	<b>for one thing</b>	<b>last of all</b>	<b>second</b>
<b>and</b>	<b>finally</b>	<b>furthermore</b>	<b>moreover</b>	<b>third</b>
<b>another</b>	<b>first</b>	<b>in addition</b>	<b>next</b>	
<b>besides</b>	<b>first of all</b>	<b>last</b>	<b>on</b>	

Refer to the box of addition transitions used in the listing pattern. Complete the following paragraph with transitions that show appropriate relationship between sentences.

### Horse Care Checklist

An animal as large and beautiful as a horse needs to be cared for carefully and diligently. 1. \_\_\_\_\_, cleaning a stall, or mucking it out on a regular basis, is absolutely necessary for the horse's health and comfort. 2. \_\_\_\_\_, a horse needs to be groomed three to five times a week; grooming includes controlling insects, caring for hooves, bathing, brushing, and possibly braiding the tail and mane. 3. \_\_\_\_\_, a horse needs to be fed and exercised on a daily basis.

## Classification Pattern

Authors use the **classification pattern** to sort ideas into smaller groups and describe the traits of each group. Each smaller group, called a *subgroup*, is based on shared traits or characteristics. The author lists each *subgroup* and describes its traits.

**Transitions used in the classification pattern:**

<b>another (group, kind, type)</b>	<b>first (group categories, kind, type)</b>	<b>order</b>
<b>characteristics</b>	<b>second (group, class, kind, type)</b>	<b>traits</b>

Determine the logical order for the following sentences, numbering the sentences 1, 2, 3, and so on, as if you were preparing to write a paragraph. Circle the classification transition words.

\_\_\_\_\_ Another type of wetland is the marsh, which is frequently or continually swamped with water; it is characterized by soft-stemmed vegetation adapted to saturated soil conditions.

\_\_\_\_\_ One type of wetland is a bog, one of North America's most distinctive wetlands; it is characterized by spongy peat deposits, acidic waters, and a floor covered by a thick carpet of sphagnum moss.

\_\_\_\_\_ Finally, a swamp is a type of wetland dominated by woody plants.

\_\_\_\_\_ Wetlands is a general term that includes several types of vital links between water and land.