

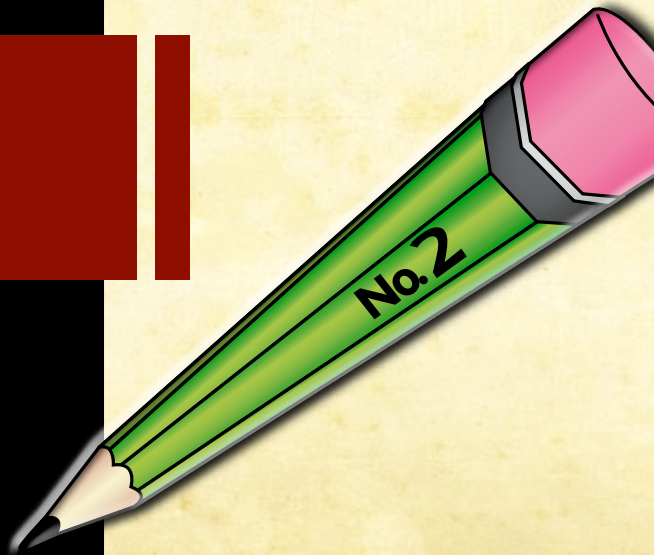
The **WRITING** CENTER

**Elftmann Student
Success Center**

**A Guide On
How To:**

**Write with
Paragraph
Patterns**

- Patterns
- Transitions



Using Paragraph Patterns in Writing

A great way to make sure your writing stays focused and makes one unified point is to concentrate on a particular pattern. The words used in your given prompt can be used as a blueprint for your writing.

Prompt Verbs	Pattern to Use	Key Words to Use	Example
Describe, Trace, Show	Cause/Effect – how one or more things cause or are the effect of another	Consequences, results, relation	Effects of using nuclear energy
Compare, Contrast, Identify	Compare/Contrast – how two or more ideas are the same or different	Differences, similarities	Nuclear energy vs. solar power
Discuss, Illustrate	Illustration – what proves a point using specific examples	Specific examples	Japan, Love Canal, Chernobyl
Discuss, Define, Identify	Definition – what a term or concept means using unique features	Characteristics, features	Renewable, disposal, efficiency
Separate, Describe, Categorize	Classification – what a topic is by sorting into categories	Categories, kinds, types, parts	“Green” energy – nuclear energy
Explain, Describe, Trace	Process – how a particular act happens, works, or happened in the past	Steps, procedures, timeline, sequences	Timeline of nuclear energy
Explain, Describe, Imagine	Description – how something looks, feels, seems, etc.	Sensory images, visual, emotion, detail	A nuclear power plant
Justify, Evaluate, Prove, Recommend	Argument – why a position on an issue is correct and reasons for it	Advantages, disadvantages, why or why not, reasons	Advantages of nuclear power

What transitions match my purpose?

Readers look for certain words and phrases to move from one idea to the next, called transitions, and to understand the purpose of your writing. If your reader cannot follow your train of thought, your point will be lost.

Pattern	Transitions
Definition Explains a term or phrase using distinguishing characteristics or synonym	Definition: Refers to, means, can be defined as, is, otherwise/also known as
	Features: consists of, specifically, especially, in particular, in detail, namely, including
Time Sequence/Process Describes steps, events, processes, or procedures	Begin: first, initially, to begin with
	Continue: second, afterward, later meanwhile, then, during
	Finish: lastly, eventually, finally, ultimately
Compare/Contrast Discusses similarities and/or differences among ideas	Compare: also, similarly, like, likewise, too, as well as, both
	Contrast: unlike, on the other hand, instead, however, in spite of, at the same time, while this may be true
Cause/Effect Shows how one or more events or issues cause or are related to each other	Cause: because, because of, since, one cause is, one reason is
	Effect: consequently, as a result, therefore, thus, accordingly
Classification Divides a topic into categories	One type, another category, in addition to, besides
Illustration Proves a point using specific examples	Intro an Example: for example, such as, namely, specifically
	Add an Example: also, moreover, furthermore, a second

Pattern	Transitions
Argument Takes a position on an issue and offers support	Support: For this purpose, to this end, above all, indeed, truly, in fact, furthermore
	Answer: of course, certainly, surely, admittedly, undoubtedly
Description Uses detail and images to give the reader a mental image	Space: above, beneath, under, over, straight ahead, surrounding, opposite, behind, nearby, beside, beyond, across, adjacent
	Direction: left, right, top, at the bottom, at the rear, at the front, side, edge, forefront, in the center

References

- Gaetz, Lynne, & Phadke, Suneeti. (2009). The writer's world. Upper Saddle River, NH: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Zackery, DeBorah Green. (2010). Paragraph writing handbook. Informally published manuscript, Student Success, Dunwoody College of Technology, Minneapolis, MN.

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