

## Tips for Improving Transitions

VARY • BURY • PULL • FIT

### *Vary:*

Introduce students to basic transition words and move them quickly into more advanced ones. Help them understand that using first, second, and third works well for paragraphs in science and math, but other than that, this transition set should be avoided. Students need to be aware of effective word choice, and varying transition words will help.

### *Bury:*

To improve sentence fluency, students can bury the transition word into the middle of the sentence rather than keeping it as a sentence opener. By burying the transition word, students will be forced to restructure the order of the sentence. This usually results in a much more interesting sentence structure.

Example:        *Another important* reason to quit smoking is this habit is expensive.

Buried:         Quitting smoking is an expensive habit, and it is *another important* reason to stop.

### *Pull:*

The transition words we provide students on wall charts are concrete. We need to eventually move them to using some abstract transitions. One way to help students write abstract transitions is to have them create a paragraph using concrete transitions and to pull (delete) one of them. Using synonyms and repetition can help, too.

Original:                        *To begin with*, tourists in Anchorage often go to the Alaska Native Heritage Center to learn about the cultures in our state.

Pull the Transition Out:        *Tourists* in Anchorage often go to the Alaska Native Heritage Center to learn about the cultures in our state.

Use Repetition:                The Aviation Museum is usually on the list for most *tourists*.

Use a Synonym:                *Visitors* to the city of Anchorage enjoy the Anchorage Museum of History and Art.

### *Fit:*

The most critical skill to teach students is to reflect on their own writing to determine if they have chosen the most effective transition for the piece of writing. Ultimately, they are the ones who must determine if it is the best fit.

Tips retrieved from *Maureen Auman's Practical Writing Series*. Videotapes available through the MS Literacy Lending Library. Contact Amy Goodman at 267-0221 to check these out.

[http://www.readwriteconnect.com/flash/products\\_SUW\\_PWS\\_videos.html](http://www.readwriteconnect.com/flash/products_SUW_PWS_videos.html)