Paragraph Coherence: Transition Words and Phrases

Purpose: Upon completion of this activity, students will understand the various techniques used to make paragraphs coherent. This DLA should take approximately 30 to 45 minutes to complete.

1. Read the attached article entitled “Organizational Patterns in Academic Writing.” You are not required to print these pages, though doing so may be helpful to you.
2. Using the information from the reading, complete the exercises below. Write your answers in the spaces provided.
3. Apply to your own writing: Look over paragraphs in a paper you are currently writing. Have you used an organizational pattern that is appropriate for your purpose? Have you used signal words that are appropriate for your organizational pattern? If you are not sure, please bring your current writing assignment to the tutor or instructor on duty along with this activity when you are ready for the consultation.
4. Before reviewing your answers with an instructor or tutor, use the space below to write any questions you still have about transition use:

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

5. Take this DLA along with any writing assignment that you may have questions about and meet with a tutor or an instructor on duty. Review your answers and your paper with that person. Have that person sign and date this sheet.

Attach a confirmation sheet or get a signature below:

Instructor Signature: ___________________________ Date: _________________________
Practice Exercises

Read the following thesis statements. Choose one of the patterns of organization from the box that best describes the pattern the author will follow. Use each choice once.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Comparison</th>
<th>c. Definition and Example</th>
<th>e. Time order</th>
<th>g. Listing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. Spatial</td>
<td>d. Cause and Effect</td>
<td>f. Classification</td>
<td>h. Generalization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. _____During the election the candidate will make a number of campaign stops throughout the United States.

2. _____Managers experience several different personnel problems that must be solved before a business can work effectively such as tardiness, poor performance, and inappropriate computer usage.

3. _____Just as we relate to others based on their personality traits, we tend to interact with our personal computers based on their performance.

4. _____Acrophobia is an intense, unreasonable fear of high places; for example my sister is unable to go above the third floor of any building without feeling enormous anxiety.

5. _____A mother’s use of alcohol during pregnancy can lead to birth defects in her unborn child.

6. _____Wetlands is a general term that includes several types of vital links between water and land.

7. _____Within a rainforest there are four layers of growth starting on the ground and moving up through the trees.

8. _____Tyler’s intelligence and energy allows him to excel in a variety of areas such as sports, academics, and community service.

(Continued on next page)
Fill in each blank with a transition from the box. Use each transition only once. Then tell what pattern of organization is used.

Steps to Stop Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as any form of unwanted sexual attention. Most companies now have sexually harassment policies in place. If you feel you are being sexually harassed, there are several steps you can take. (1) ____________, ask the harasser to stop. Be clear and direct. This may be the first time the person has ever been told such behavior is wrong. (2) ____________, record the event. Having a record of exactly what occurred (and when and where) will be helpful in making your case. (3) ____________, complain to a higher authority. Talk to your manager about what happened. (4) ____________, remember that you have not done anything wrong. You will likely feel awful (5) ____________ being harassed. However, you should feel proud that you are not keeping silent.


What pattern of organization is used in this paragraph? ____________________________

Reading a book is always much better than watching a movie based on a book. (7) ____________ the saying “A picture is worth a thousand words,” a book is able to give much more information than a movie can give. The author can give the thoughts of characters; (8) ____________, a movie usually conveys only the actions and words of the characters. A book can follow several characters and plot lines, but a movie usually has less than two hours to tell the story and must follow just a few characters or one plot line. The final (9) ____________ is one of imagination. Each reader of a book can create a different mental picture of the characters and scenes. A movie, (10) ____________, can offer only the vision of the director and actors.

What pattern of organization is used in this paragraph? ____________________________

(Continued on next page)
Laws That Protect Children

Unwanted infants are protected by (12) ___________ of laws. Both (13) ___________ deal with parents who are unable to cope with the pressures of parenthood. (14) ___________ of law punishes neglect. Several states, such as Georgia and Massachusetts, will put parents in jail for several years if they leave or abandon a child. (15) ___________ of law rewards parents for handing their unwanted children over to authorities. A number of states, such as South Carolina and California, have “safe haven” laws. (16) ___________ of laws allow parents to leave the unwanted child at a church or hospital without being charged with a crime. These laws are supposed to lead to better treatment for the unwanted children.

What pattern of organization is used in this paragraph? __________________________