

Making Your Writing Flow

by Mary Applegate

DEFINITION: “Flow” in writing refers to creating a steady stream of words used *coherently* and *cohesively* so the reader can easily understand what is being said.

Four steps to writing a paragraph that flows

1.) Create a sentence that makes a “point.” (**topic sentence**)

2.) Support your topic sentence with evidence. This includes explanations, examples, and/or quoted or paraphrased material.
(**body**)

3.) Explain *how* your evidence supports your point. (**body**)

3.) Conclude your paragraph by developing a one-statement summary in different words or a transitional sentence.
(**conclusion**)

MAKE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENTENCES CLEAR

- *select the best words
- *use transitions
- *integrate a partial quote into your text
- *be consistent in tone, person, and verb tense

WHY DOESN'T THIS PARAGRAPH FLOW?

When it comes to high school teachers dating their students, I think it depends on whether they're in love. I think parents and people running the school should stay out of it for the most part. I think it's mostly between the teacher and the student. The teacher may be older than the student, but that shouldn't matter. You might have thought that because of this and the teacher's high position, he can't do a good job of grading the students, that he might be biased and give her a good grade just because they're dating.

WHAT MAKES THIS PARAGRAPH FLOW?

High school teachers should not date their students because this interferes with their objectivity. For example, teachers are required to grade students' papers. If a teacher is dating a student, he may unknowingly give that student a higher grade than what she deserves. If that happens, all students may end up losing confidence in the teacher.

COMMON TRANSITIONS

NOTE: The following has been adapted from *Rules for Writer* (Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers) for educational purposes only.

To show addition:

and, also, additionally, in addition, furthermore, first, second, third, next

To give examples:

for example, for instance, to illustrate this point, in fact

To compare:

also, similarly, likewise, in the same manner

To contrast:

however, on the one hand, on the other hand, nevertheless, on the contrary

MORE TRANSITIONS

To conclude:

therefore, in summary, in conclusion, in short

To show sequence:

before, next, first, second, third, finally

Cause-effect:

therefore, consequently, as a result, for this reason, thus, since, because

CAN YOU MAKE THIS PARAGRAPH FLOW BETTER?

We probably shouldn't make marijuana a legal thing. I hear marijuana is a hallucinogen. It's addictive. This can be dangerous. People who smoke it become dope fiends. They get addicted to heroin and stuff. They were not able to hold a job for a long time. It's a bad habit.

SAME PARAGRAPH THAT FLOWS BETTER

Marijuana should not be legalized because it is harmful. Though it has not been proven to be physically addictive, it is well-known for being psychologically addictive in some personalities. According to Smith and Jones (2010), many people who begin smoking marijuana, “move on to harder drugs” (p. 44). Since use of harder drugs can lead to physical addiction, it is clear that marijuana places the user at risk.

Partial quote was integrated

Transition words/phrases used: because, though, according to, since

Consistency in tone, person, and verb tense