

Writing Cohesively and Achieving Flow

Readers need to follow the connection between your ideas. **Cohesive devices** help explain and connect those complex ideas in your writing. Use cohesive devices to add information, present opposing ideas, and come to conclusions.

List of cohesive devices:

time

Before, meanwhile, later, soon, at last, earlier, thereafter, afterward, by that time, from then on, first, second, third, next, now, presently, shortly, immediately, finally, at this time, thereafter, formerly, previously, at this point, during, before, after

to compare

Likewise, similarly, once again, once more, like, likewise, by comparison, similar to

to contrast

But, yet, however, although, whereas, though, even so, nonetheless, still, on the other hand, on the contrary, besides, conversely, in contrast, instead, nevertheless, regardless, whereas, while, yet, although, despite, unlike

to conclude

As a result, consequently, therefore, hence, for this reason, in summary, in other words, on the whole, thus, in conclusion, hence, ultimately, finally

to add

Again, also, and, and then, besides, equally, further(more), in addition (to...), indeed, next, in fact, moreover, too, what is more, finally, additionally, further

to contradict

However, whereas, while, still, alternatively, nevertheless, on the other hand, instead, in spite of, in contrast, even though

to give an example

For example, for instance, to illustrate, such as, specifically, to demonstrate

Examples:

Early empires had many common characteristics. **For example**, many empires promoted themselves as holding greater size and power than the historical reality.

Langston Hughes writes about loss and the pursuit of dreams in his poem “Dream Deferred.” **As a result**, his poem has become a memorable and inspirational text to many who have read it.

Even though the study found a minimal increase in participants’ vascular tone and insulin sensitivity, a 40% increase in cholesterol levels is more detrimental than this small benefit. **Similarly**, another study found a 30% increase in cholesterol levels for 200 participants aged 40 to 55 who ate two dark chocolate bars in a week, and an even more incremental increase in vascular tone and insulin sensitivity (Mahad 2014).

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Some scholars have noted that there is a strong relationship between gender and the nation. **However**, other scholars have found that the strength of this relationship depends on the cultural context of each nation.

Use Cohesive Devices:

- as a bridge between two ideas
- as signposts to signal what's coming up
- to avoid abrupt stops between ideas

Industrialisation in England shifted ideas about gender roles in three ways. **First**, the creation of mass production caused a separation between home and work that did not exist before.

Second, ... **Third**, ...

Here, the writer is forecasting what is coming up in her paper, creating signposts for the reader.

Achieving Flow

- Use the old before new rule to achieve flow in your writing. Put 'old' information in the beginning of your sentence, and 'new' information at the end.
- Begin sentences with information familiar to your reader.
- To you, everything is familiar, since you have worked out your ideas on the topic. Try to begin sentences with only information that is familiar to your reader.

Which sounds better?:

1. Ann conducted a research **study** in the social sciences. In **Dubai**, she interviewed twenty people.
2. Ann conducted a research **study** in the social sciences. As part of her **study**, she interviewed twenty people in Dubai.

The second example has 'flow' because it follows the old before new rule. In the first sentence, we learn about Ann's study. Once your reader reads this sentence, the information it contains becomes 'old.' So, the sentence that follows it must carry on with that 'old' information about her study. Our number two example does just that. In the beginning of the second sentence, we receive the 'old' information about Ann's study. The second half of the sentence, 'she interviewed twenty people in Dubai,' becomes our new information.

The first example doesn't achieve flow because it doesn't follow the old before new rule. The first half of the second sentence, "In Dubai," doesn't provide the reader with any of the old information about Ann's study. In fact, mentioning Dubai is new information, and it makes the reader wonder: why did she go to Dubai? It asks the reader to make connections for the

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writer, rather than the other way around. As the writer, you want to make all the connections for the reader.

Ann conducted a research **study** in the social sciences (**old**). As part of her **study**, she interviewed twenty people in Dubai (**new**).

Ann conducted a research **study** in the social sciences. As part of her **study**, she interviewed twenty people in Dubai. While **interviewing** participants, she asked them **questions** about their national identity. The **interviewees answered** that they felt pride in their national language of Arabic.

Keep using the old before new rule to create flow in your writing.

Here are a few more examples:

Globalisation is made up of **flows** of information, technology, capital, culture and people. **These flows** have no single destination, but instead include processes that are uneven and complex.

The Industrial age in England brought about many changes to work and family life. The effects of **this time period** helped to create the gender relations we recognise today.

Use synonyms to avoid repetition.

Pronouns: Your Friend and Enemy

- Sometimes, the pronoun and what it refers to is clear, and this helps you avoid repetition in your writing.
- Other times, the reference is unclear, because there are too many nouns to choose from.
- Try to avoid beginning sentences with the word “It.” “It” is the most vague of the pronouns, and can refer to nearly anything at all.
- More often, use a concrete noun (such as ‘empire’, ‘the author,’ or ‘industry,’ instead of ‘it’) to improve clarity.
- A pronoun, like ‘it’ or ‘this’ cannot just refer to the entire previous sentence. Pronouns like ‘it’ or ‘this’ only refer to one particular noun. Make sure the noun it refers to is clear, or restate the noun.

Example:

In 18th century England, the idea of the companionate marriage began. As a result, authors wrote about marriage in new ways. **It** helped to establish relationships based on mutual feelings. But **it** wasn’t a cure for unhappy relationships. **It** created other problems too.

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In 18th century England, the idea of the companionate marriage began. As a result, authors wrote about marriage in new ways. **This new style of marriage** helped to establish relationships based on mutual feelings. But **these unions** weren't a cure for unhappy relationships. **Companionate marriages** created other problems too.

Keep clarifying your meaning in new ways, rather than repeating 'It.'