Transition Map

Writing a paper is a road trip. The paper’s topic is the destination, and the paper itself is the map that tells the reader how to get there. Transitions are landmarks; they give readers ideas where the paper is going. A transition can be a word or phrase; the different kinds are sorted into five main groups. These five groups can be remembered using a compass as shown in Figure 1:

1. **New Idea:** These imply that the paper is going in a new direction.
   - Is this the first idea of the paper (after the intro)?
     - “One of the ways that Chopin shows Edna’s development is by describing her new pastimes.”
   - Are we looking at a topic from a different perspective?
     - “Although having fits may seem childish, Edna’s interactions with her peers demonstrate her reluctance to obey the domestic sphere.”
   - Are you using a counterargument to make your position stronger?
     - “Designing a statically indeterminate bridge might seem unnecessary, but if one of the required supports is damaged, then the extras will help prevent collapse.”

2. **Emphasis/Examples:** These should be used to introduce evidence or help explain its significance.

![Transition Compass Diagram](image-url)
3. **When and Where:** These give the reader an idea where a certain event takes place in the paper.

- When does this event/piece of evidence happen?
  - “At the beginning of the story, the Creature educates himself with Milton’s works, believing that people would overlook his horrid appearance for his mind.”

- Where does this piece of information happen in relation to others, the paper itself?
  - “The vehicles and cargo’s weights caused compression when they travelled across the bridge, as illustrated in Figure 2.b.”

4. **Similar Perspective/Summary:** These give the reader an idea similar to the previous one in the paper.

- Is this idea similar to the previous one?
  - “While the foundation was a critical factor in the Peace River Bridge’s collapse, so was the engineers and local authorities’ bridge maintenance.”

- What does this perspective say about the paper’s topic as a whole? (Big Picture)
  - “As a result, William Seward’s purchase of Alaska vastly improved the United States’ economic opportunities.”

5. **Conjunctions:** These link words and phrases to ideas or pieces of evidence in the paper.

- Are these ideas similar to each other?
  - “The bridge’s collapse was due to poorly fitted parts and lack of internal supports.”

- Are these ideas different from each other (contradiction, counterargument)?
  - “Engineers should apply their knowledge about mechanics, materials, and technologies instead of trying to appease those who only see the surface of the situation.”

- Why is this evidence relevant to the current argument/overall paper?
  - “Therefore, people should care about their mental and physical health equally.”