Lesson Skill: Transition words in writing

Strand Writing
SOL 3.9, 3.10
  4.6, 4.7
  5.6, 5.7

Materials
  • Copies of the Transition Word Sort (attached)
  • Content area textbook
  • Magazines with pictures for cutting

Lesson
  1. Have students cut out the word-sort cards and sort the words under the correct headings of Time, Space, Examples, and Summary, which are included in the sort cards.
     Teacher Key
     o Time: after, next, meanwhile, before
     o Examples: for example, for instance, in other words
     o Space: below, around, beside, next to
     o Summary: therefore, finally, as a result, in conclusion, behind
  2. Have students do a word hunt in their science or social studies textbooks (or another textbook) for transition words to add to the sort. Note: There are other categories of transition words. Should students find words that would fit under headings other than Time, Space, Examples, and Summary, they can make a column for Other Words, or they can create categories on their own.
  3. Have students find a picture in a magazine that they feel would inspire a “How-To” piece of writing. For example, students may tear out a picture of an ad for dog shampoo, then write a piece entitled “How to Bathe Your Dog.” Have students write a “How-To” paragraph about their magazine picture using their new bank of words (from the above hunt-and-sort).

Strategies for Differentiation
  • Ask, “What are examples of words in a story that indicate the order the events took place?” Explain the purpose of transition words in reading and writing.
  • Display a list of transition words. Ask students to use transition words in sentences and share them with the class. Discuss appropriate times to use specific transition words.
  • Model the use of transition words by reading a “How to...” aloud.
  • Provide small groups with sample essays, and have students put a colored box around all transition words.
# Transition Word Sort

Directions: Cut apart all word cards. Sort the transition words (non-bold print) under the headings (bold print).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>after</th>
<th>beside</th>
<th>as a result</th>
<th>below</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>therefore</td>
<td>for instance</td>
<td>meanwhile</td>
<td>in conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>next to</td>
<td>next</td>
<td>for example</td>
<td>behind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>in other words</td>
<td>around</td>
<td>finally</td>
<td>before</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>