

VISUAL THESAURUS-BASED TASKS

Transition Words and Phrases: Road Signs for the Reader

TARGET GROUP	Higher grades of secondary school (B1 +)
CONTEXT (Ex: in class, online etc.)	Blended learning environment
LEARNING OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debate the use of various transition words for a particular context • Define and sort various transition words and phrases by using the Visual Thesaurus • Explore the role transition words play in specific quotations
TOOLS AND RESOURCES	Visual Thesaurus , student notebooks, white board, computers or iPads with Internet access and “Transition Words and Phrases” handouts (one per student).
CONTENT	<p>STEPS.</p> <p>1. Warm-up: Completing a sentence with a transition word: Write the following quotation on the board: <i>"Once a user has tweeted once, there is a 65% chance that they will tweet again. After that second tweet, _____, the chance of a third tweet goes up to 81%."</i> —The Guardian’s Technology Blog</p> <p>Have students rewrite the sentence in their notebooks and to complete the sentence by choosing one of the following transition words: a) therefore b) however c) furthermore</p> <p>Ask student volunteers to reveal how they completed the sentence and to give a rationale for their word choice.</p> <p>Emphasizing the importance of transition words: Hold a brief discussion about how each of the words would alter the sentence’s message. Reveal to students that the original sentence was taken from a technology blog article and it contained the word however – emphasizing the contrast between the 65% chance of someone using twitter again after their first tweet AND the 81% chance of someone using twitter again after their second tweet.</p> <p>Explain that transition words fulfil a dual purpose in writing: to create flow in a piece of writing by connecting or transitioning between ideas, and also to indicate specific relationships between ideas. Without transition words, writing would be choppy and disconnected.</p> <p>Emphasize that the word options in the warm-up — however, therefore and furthermore — might seem like bland connectors that are simply linking different ideas, but they do more than that. They act as signals to the reader, suggesting particular relationships between the different thoughts or points in a text.</p> <p>2. Using the Visual Thesaurus to sort transition words by meaning: On the white board, display the word map for therefore and point out that the central meaning that therefore, thence, hence and so share is “used to introduce a logical conclusion.” (Note: If you are on a computer, hover your cursor over the central purple meaning bubble to reveal the meaning. If you are on an iPad, hold your finger on the bubble.)</p>



Organize the class into small groups (group size dependent upon iPad or computer availability) and distribute to each group a “Transition Words and Phrases” handout.

Explain that most transition words and phrases fulfil a few different purposes in writing. For example, some indicate contrast (e.g., on the other hand) while others signal additional information (e.g., moreover). It will be the students’ task to look up a variety of transition words/phrases and to categorize them according to what role they usually play in a piece of writing.

Instruct groups to look up each of the 31 transition words and phrases on the Visual Thesaurus and to then categorize each word or phrase in the appropriate column of the chart. (See the first column below as a model.)

Transition Words and Phrases:

<p>Accordingly all the same as a matter of fact also besides consequently especially even so for example for instance furthermore hence however in addition indeed in fact in particular likewise moreover nevertheless nonetheless on the other hand on the contrary particularly so specifically still thence therefore thus yet</p>

to introduce a logical conclusion or consequence	to show contrast or “despite anything to the contrary”	to introduce an additional point	to introduce an example
Therefore			
thence			
Hence			
so			

Wrap-up:

Sharing completed transition words charts:

Ask each small group to share a particular column on the chart, pointing to the specific Visual Thesaurus word maps that showed an array of transition word options to convey the meaning or usage indicated by the column.

Using Vocabulary.com dictionary usage examples or a search engine (such as Google or Bing), have students try to find examples of each of the transition words and phrases in the context of articles. Discuss what types of articles usually use many transition words and phrases (e.g., editorials, scientific papers, trial transcripts, etc.).

ASSESSMENT

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS’ WORK

TEACHER SELF-EVALUATION OF THE ACTIVITY

Check students’ “Transition Words and Phrases” charts to see if they correctly categorized each transition word and phrase in the appropriate column.

Assess students’ mastery of transition words by either having them complete a cloze-style text with transition words and phrases, or to write an original argument using a minimum number of transition words and phrases.

Students can also peer-assess their work by examining each other’s “Transition Words and Phrases”.

ADDED VALUE

(Increase in value created by the use of the ICT tool)

- Different, but similar meanings of transition words and phrases are neatly and practically graphically displayed to be more easily grasped by learners
- 'Traditional' way of looking up the unknown words is surmounted – there is no need for long searches through paper dictionaries (or digital ones for that matter): all semantically related words are displayed on a single map

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

This very rich resources can be overwhelming for students. A guided exploration of the tool can help familiarize the students with the tool.

Source: visualthesaurus.com