Cohesion Strategies: Transitional Words and Phrases

Here we'll consider how transitional words and phrases can help make our writing clear and cohesive.

A key quality of an effective paragraph is unity. A unified paragraph sticks to one topic from start to finish, with every sentence contributing to the central purpose and main idea of that paragraph.

But a strong paragraph is more than just a collection of loose sentences. Those sentences need to be clearly connected so that readers can follow along, recognizing how one detail leads to the next. A paragraph with clearly connected sentences is said to be cohesive.

The following paragraph is unified and cohesive. Notice how the italicized words and phrases (called transitions) guide us along, helping us see how one detail leads to the next.

Why I Don't Make My Bed

Ever since I moved into my own apartment last fall, I have gotten out of the habit of making my bed--except on Fridays, of course, when I change the sheets. Although some people may think that I am a slob, I have some sound reasons for breaking the bed-making habit. In the first place, I am not concerned about maintaining a tidy bedroom because no one except me ever ventures in there. If there is ever a fire inspection or a surprise date, I suppose I can dash in there to fluff up the pillow and slap on a spread. Otherwise, I am not bothered. In addition, I find nothing uncomfortable about crawling into a rumpled mass of sheets and blankets. On the contrary, I enjoy poking out a cozy space for myself before drifting off to sleep. Also, I think that a tightly made bed is downright uncomfortable: entering one makes me feel like a loaf of bread being wrapped and sealed. Finally, and most importantly, I think bed-making is an
awful way to waste time in the morning. I would rather spend those precious minutes checking my email or feeding the cat than tucking in corners or snapping the spread.

Transitional words and phrases guide readers from one sentence to the next. Although they most often appear at the beginning of a sentence, they may also show up after the subject. Here are the common transitional expressions, grouped according to the type of relationship shown by each.

1. **Addition Transitions**

   and
   also
   besides
   first, second, third
   in addition
   in the first place, in the second place, in the third place
   furthermore
   moreover
   **to begin with, next, finally**

Example

**In the first place**, no "burning" in the sense of combustion, as in the burning of wood, occurs in a volcano; **moreover**, volcanoes are not necessarily mountains; **furthermore**, the activity takes place not
always at the summit but more commonly on the sides or flanks; and finally, the "smoke" is not smoke but condensed steam.

(Fred Bullard, Volcanoes in History)

2. Cause-Effect Transitions

accordingly
and so
as a result
consequently
for this reason
hence
so
then
therefore
thus

Example

The ideologue is often brilliant. Consequently some of us distrust brilliance when we should distrust the ideologue.

(Clifton Fadiman)

3. Comparison Transitions
by the same token
in like manner
in the same way
in similar fashion
likewise
similarly

Example

When you start with a portrait and search for a pure form, a clear volume, through successive eliminations, you arrive inevitably at the egg. Likewise, starting with the egg and following the same process in reverse, one finishes with the portrait.

(Pablo Picasso)

4. Contrast Transitions

but
however
in contrast
instead
nevertheless
on the contrary
on the other hand
still
yet
Example

Every American, to the last man, lays claim to a “sense” of humor and guards it as his most significant spiritual trait, yet rejects humor as a contaminating element wherever found. America is a nation of comics and comedians; nevertheless, humor has no stature and is accepted only after the death of the perpetrator.

(E. B. White)

5. Conclusion and Summary Transitions

and so
after all
at last
finally
in brief
in closing
in conclusion
on the whole
to conclude
to summarize

Example

Reporters are not paid to operate in retrospect. Because when news begins to solidify into current events and finally harden into history, it is the stories we didn’t write, the questions we didn’t ask that prove far, far more damaging than the ones we did.
6. Example Transitions

as an example
for example
for instance
specifically
thus
to illustrate

Example

With all the ingenuity involved in hiding delicacies on the body, this process automatically excludes certain foods. For example, a turkey sandwich is welcome, but the cumbersome cantaloupe is not.

(Steve Martin, "How to Fold Soup")

7. Insistence Transitions

in fact
indeed
no
yes

Example

The joy of giving is indeed a pleasure, especially when you get rid of something you don’t want.
8. **Place Transitions**

above
alongside
beneath
beyond
farther along
in back
in front
nearby
on top of
to the left
to the right
under
upon

Example

What did it matter where you lay once you were dead? In a dirty sump or in a marble tower on top of a high hill? You were dead, you were sleeping the big sleep, you were not bothered by things like that.

(Raymond Chandler, The Big Sleep)

9. **Restatement Transitions**

in other words
in short
in simpler terms
that is
to put it differently
to repeat

Example

Anthropologist Geoffrey Gorer studied the few peaceful human tribes and discovered one common characteristic: sex roles were not polarized. Differences of dress and occupation were at a minimum. Society in other words, was not using sexual blackmail as a way of getting women to do cheap labor, or men to be aggressive.

(Gloria Steinem, "What It Would Be Like If Women Win")

10. **Time Transitions**

afterward
at the same time
currently
earlier
formerly
immediately
in the future
in the meantime
in the past
later
meanwhile
Example

At first a toy, then a mode of transportation for the rich, the automobile was designed as man's mechanical servant. Later it became part of the pattern of living.

--------------------------------------------------

above all
accordingly
additionally
after all
again
all in all
all things considered
also
as a consequence
as a result
as a rule
as an example of
as well as
aside from
at first glance
at the same time
beginning with

**being similar in many ways**
besides
beyond
briefly
but
by and large
certainly
chiefly
coincidentally
consequently
contrary to
contrasting

**conversely**
comparable

**corresponding to**
coupled with
depending upon
decidedly
despite
doubly important
effectively
especially
excluding
except
excepting
exclusive of
first of all
for example
for instance
for now
for one thing

**for the most part**

for the time being
for this reason
fortunately
frequently
furthermore
generally
gradually
however
in addition
in any case
in any event
in brief
in conclusion
in contrast

**in essence**
in other words
in particular
in short

**in summary**
in the end
in the final analysis
in the first place
subsequent to
2. Organize Your Writing

Organization is the key to successful legal writing. Create a roadmap for your writing by using visual clues to guide the reader. Introduce your subject in an introductory paragraph, use transitional phrases (“moreover, “furthermore,” “however,” “in addition,” etc.) between each paragraph, introduce each paragraph with a topic sentence and use headings and subheadings to break up blocks of text. Limit each paragraph to one topic and sum up your message with a
concluding sentence or paragraph. Organizational structure guides the reader through your text and promotes readability.

3. Ditch The Legalese

Legalese - specialized legal phrases and jargon - can make your writing abstract, stilted and archaic. Examples of legalese include words such as aforementioned, herewith, heretofore and wherein. Ditch unnecessary legalese and other jargon in favor of the clear and simple. To avoid legalese and promote clarity, try reading your sentence to a colleague or substituting abstract words with simple, concrete terms. For example, instead of “I am in receipt of your correspondence,” “I received your letter” is clearer and more succinct.

4. Be Concise

Every word you write should contribute to your message. Omit extraneous words, shorten complex sentences, eliminate redundancies and keep it simple.

Consider the following sentence:

“Due to the fact that the defendant has not attempted to pay back the money owed to our client in the amount of $3,000 it has become absolutely essential that we take appropriate legal action in order to obtain payment of the aforesaid amount.”

A more concise version reads: “Since the defendant has not paid the $3,000 owed our client, we will file a lawsuit seeking reimbursement.” The latter sentence conveys the same information in 18 words versus 44. Omitting unnecessary words helps clarify the meaning of the sentence and adds impact.

5. Use Action Words

Action words make your legal prose more powerful, dynamic and vivid. Add punch to your writing with verbs that bring your prose to life. Here are a few examples:

**Weak:** The defendant was not truthful. **Better:** The defendant lied.

**Weak:** The witness quickly came into the courtroom. **Better:** The witness bolted into the courtroom.

**Weak:** The judge was very angry. **Better:** The judge was enraged.

6. Avoid Passive Voice

Passive voice disguises responsibility for an act by eliminating the subject of the verb. Active voice, on the other hand, tells the reader who is doing the acting and clarifies your message. For
example, instead of “the filing deadline was missed,” say “plaintiff’s counsel missed the filing deadline.” Instead of “a crime was committed,” say “the defendant committed the crime.”

7. Edit Ruthlessly

Edit your writing ruthlessly, omitting unnecessary words and rewriting for clarity. Careful proofreading is particularly important in legal writing. Spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors in a document submitted to the court, opposing counsel or a client can undermine your credibility as a legal professional.

# Lead with your main idea.

As a general rule, state the main idea of a paragraph in the first sentence--the topic sentence. Don't keep your readers guessing. See Practice in Composing Topic Sentences.

- **Vary the length of your sentences.**
  In general, use short sentences to emphasize ideas. Use longer sentences to explain, define, or illustrate ideas.
  See Sentence Variety.

- **Put key words and ideas at the beginning or end of a sentence.**
  Don't bury a main point in the middle of a long sentence. To emphasize key words, place them at the beginning or (better yet) at the end.
  See Emphasis.

- **Vary sentence types and structures.**
  Vary sentence types by including occasional questions and commands. Vary sentence structures by blending simple, compound, and complex sentences.
  See Basic Sentence Structures.

- **Use active verbs.**
  Don't overwork the passive voice or forms of the verb "to be." Instead, use active verbs in the active voice.
  See F. Scott Fitzgerald's New York in the 1920s.

- **Use specific nouns and verbs.**
  To convey your message clearly and keep your readers engaged, use concrete and specific words that show what you mean.
  See Detail and Descriptive Details in Wallace Stegner's "Town Dump."

- **Cut the clutter.**
  When revising your work, eliminate unnecessary words.
  See Practice in Cutting the Clutter.
• **Read aloud when you revise.**

When revising, you may *hear* problems (of tone, emphasis, word choice, and syntax) that you can't see. So listen up!
See [On Reading Aloud](#).

• **Actively edit and proofread.**

It's easy to *overlook* errors when merely *looking over* your work. So be on the lookout for common trouble spots when studying your final draft.
See [Revision Checklist](#) and [Editing Checklist](#).

- Use a dictionary.

When *proofreading*, don't trust your *spellchecker*: it can tell you only if a word *is* a word, not if it's the *right* word.
See [Commonly Confused Words](#) and [Fifteen Common Errors](#).

• "A good **topic sentence** is concise and emphatic. It is no longer than the idea requires, and it stresses the important word or phrase. Here, for instance, is the topic sentence which opens a paragraph about the collapse of the stock market in 1929:

  **The Bull Market was dead.**

  (Frederick Lewis Allen)

  Notice several things. (1) Allen's sentence is brief. Not all topics can be explained in six words, but whether they take six or sixty, they should be phrased in no more words than are absolutely necessary. (2) The sentence is clear and strong: you understand exactly what Allen means. (3) It places the key word--'dead'--at the end, where it gets heavy stress and leads naturally into what will follow. . . . (4) The sentence stands first in the paragraph. This is where topic sentences generally belong: at or near the beginning."


• "If you want readers to see your point immediately, open with the **topic sentence**. This strategy can be particularly useful in letters of application or in *argumentative* writing. . . .

"When specific details lead up to a generalization, putting the topic sentence at the end of the paragraph makes sense. . . .

"Occasionally a paragraph's main idea is so obvious that it does not need to be stated explicitly in a topic sentence."


• "The **topic sentence** is the most important sentence in your paragraph. Carefully worded and restricted, it helps you generate and control your information. An effective topic sentence also helps readers grasp your main idea quickly. As you draft your paragraphs, pay close attention to the following three guidelines:
1. Make sure you provide a topic sentence. . . .
2. Put your topic sentence first. . . .
3. Be sure your topic sentence is focused. If restricted, a topic sentence discusses only one central idea. A broad or unrestricted topic sentence leads to a shaky, incomplete paragraph for two reasons:
   - The paragraph will not contain enough information to support the topic sentence.
   - A broad topic sentence will not summarize or forecast specific information in the paragraph.

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How about your introduction — is it clear enough? Does it contain enough information to lead your readers to your main points? Is your conclusion effective? Does it stray from the topic or your thesis statement? One helpful trick is to read your introduction and your conclusion (skipping the parts in between), and ask yourself if both are saying the same thing. If not, you need to revise.

Look closely at the bulk of your writing.

✓ If your piece of writing requires a thesis, do you state it clearly?
✓ Do you make sure that each of your supporting points relates to your thesis?
✓ Are all of your other sentences focused on your thesis?
✓ Have you checked that each sentence relates to the point of the individual paragraph it's in?
✓ Have you presented all of your information coherently?
✓ Have you given enough examples, facts, or details to support each of your points?
✓ If you gave examples in your work, did you explain why each example is significant? Do your examples follow each other in a logical order? Would rearranging them (for example, in chronological or emphatic order) make them clearer or more forceful?
✓ Would adding anything strengthen your work?
✓ Will your audience be familiar with all the terms you used? If not, you may need to add extra explanatory information.

Take a look at the organization of your paragraphs.

✓ Would your points be more emphatic or clearer if your paragraphs were organized differently?
✓ If you moved or eliminated any of them, would your work be easier to understand? If you think a problem may be in the way your material flows, try cutting and pasting paragraphs into different positions.

Consider the tone you've used throughout the piece.

✓ Is it suitable for your audience?
✓ Have you gone overboard and ended up presenting your material in a manner that's too personal or too emotional?
✓ Have you used any language that's inappropriate either for your audience or the genre of writing?
✓ Did you adhere to the formatting or style that was mandated?
✓ Did you format your material to use prescribed margin sizes, font style, point size, or spacing requirements?
✓ Were you mandated to use a particular style to identify yourself, your class, your department, or your company?
✓ Are your pages numbered in the right places? in the right way?
✓ If you have included any tables or graphs, have you labeled them well enough that your readers will have no problem interpreting them?
• ✓ Do any of them need information in addition to captions?
• ✓ Have you included a title that communicates the concepts of your paper?
• ✓ If your paper is about a literary work, have you stated the author's first and last names and the title of the work?
• ✓ After you cited the author the first time, have you used only his or her last name in later references?
• ✓ Have you used the citation or documentation methods required for your paper?
• ✓ Have you checked to see that any paraphrasing you included was in fact paraphrasing and not a direct quote?

**Particulars to Ponder in the Perusal of Your Piece**

Analyze each individual sentence. Have you varied your sentence structure and the length of your sentences? Do many sentences begin in the same way (for example, look for several sentences that start with “The company …” or “The main character …”)?

**Sentence Structure**

Check to see if a number of your sentences are composed in a subject-verb-complement format. If you have too much repetition, vary your sentence structure (create more compound or compound-complex sentences), change your sentence length, or alter the rhythm of your words. Do whatever it takes to keep monotony out of your writing. Finally, look to see if several of your sentences have nearly the same number of words; if so, try combining some of them.

Do you need to put any of your sentences on a diet? Have you over-explained anything? Look for wording that can be more concise. If you can use fewer words and convey the same meaning, by all means do so. Examine each sentence and ask yourself if your wording could be more precise, more vivid, or more explanatory.

**Pronouns**

Note the types of pronouns you use in your paper. Red flag any first-or second-person pronouns (I, me, we, you, us). Is using them in writing acceptable in your class or workplace? Is it appropriate? While you're looking at pronouns, check to see that you have maintained a consistent point of view with them.

**Transitions**

Study how you change course in your writing.

✓ Have you used transitional words and phrases to your best advantage?
✓ Have you used enough transitions so that your work reads smoothly?
✓ Do your transitions guide your readers from one thought to the next?
From one paragraph to the next? Have you used them in the correct way?

Do you see any related thoughts or sentences that would become stronger if you inserted a transitional word or phrase?

Voice

Except for certain scientific material, you should write using the active voice whenever possible. If you have a number of sentences that contain be verbs (is, are, was, were, and so on), change the structure of your sentence. For instance, you could change:

The downtown area is enhanced by the new streetlights. (passive voice)

to

The new streetlights enhance the downtown area. (active voice)

Along the same lines, look for sentences that begin with expletives like it, this, or there; these sentences often become more forceful when you reword them. If you've written, for instance:

There are six changes that should be made in the method of production of the widget.

you can make the sentence stronger by changing it to:

Six changes should be made in the production method of the widget.

Word Choice

Can you use any synonyms to make your meaning clearer or to make your work read more smoothly? Don't hesitate to consult a dictionary or thesaurus. (If you're using a word processor, you probably have quick access to a built-in thesaurus.) If you can, substitute synonyms for repeated words or phrases.

Has any slang or jargon crept into your work? Ask yourself if using it is appropriate, and reword as necessary. Also look for any clichés and change them to more original thoughts.

Some instructors (and perhaps some companies) dictate that certain words not be used (generally these are overused words like great and very). If that applies to you, have you checked through to see if you have deleted those particular words or phrases? The find function on word processing software can show you if any prohibited words or phrases appear in your work, and the thesaurus can help you to find replacements.

Jettisoning Gender-Based Generalities

One hot spot you want to make sure you avoid in your written work is the use of sexist language. If you've mentioned particular jobs by name, for example, make sure your wording isn't
exclusively all-male or all-female. The following list of substitutions might help you to avoid sexist language:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexist Term</th>
<th>Substitution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chairman/chairwoman</td>
<td>chair, chairperson, presiding officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coed</td>
<td>student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>congressman/congresswoman</td>
<td>congressional representative, legislator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forefathers</td>
<td>ancestors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foreman</td>
<td>supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>layman</td>
<td>layperson, nonspecialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man/men</td>
<td>person/people, individual(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man hours</td>
<td>work hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mankind</td>
<td>men and women, humankind, the human race, humanity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man-made</td>
<td>synthetic, manufactured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manpower</td>
<td>workforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one-man show</td>
<td>one-person show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policeman</td>
<td>police officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saleslady/salesman/saleswoman</td>
<td>sales clerk, salesperson, sales representative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In years gone by, the rule was to use the masculine pronouns he, him, or his to refer to any noun that could be masculine or feminine. (“Every employee must check his voice mail.”) Today that rule is obsolete; the generally accepted rule is to use both the masculine and feminine forms. (“Every employee must check his or her voice mail.”)

Look at these Web sites and try the online exercises about gender-based language:

| tinyurl.com/yqf5z7 | tinyurl.com/yv7knm |

In an effort to avoid sexist language, however, you may find yourself using too many dual constructions (he or she, his or hers, and him or her), which can make your writing boring and cumbersome. To avoid having to use too many of these constructions, you might:

- Change your wording to plural pronouns.
  
  Original: Each supervisor should greet all of his or her employees by name.
  
  Revised: Supervisors should greet all their employees by name.

- Substitute a noun
  
  Original: Tell him to change the sexist language.
Revised: Tell the writer to change the sexist language.

- Alternate using a male and a female pronoun in long constructions where you must use a singular form
- Reword your sentences to use the first or second person (providing this is permitted)

Original: If a driver loses a number of points on his license, he must attend driving school.

Revised: If you lose a number of points on your license, you must attend driving school.

Alternate revised: If we lose a number of points on our license, we must attend driving school.

**The Revising Process**

After you've checked your paper for all these points, you'll probably need to rewrite parts of it. Jump right in and do it. Then reread the revision section and apply it to your rewritten version. (Remember that warning that more than one revision would be necessary?)

If you're writing on a computer, use a spell checker to catch mistakes you don't see. Remember, though, that a spell checker won't catch words that are spelled correctly but that aren't the words you intended. To get around that problem, you need to use your own eagle eye for checking.

A computer's grammar checker is another story; use it with a grain of salt. If you send your manuscript through a grammar checker, be aware that you may disagree with what the computer tells you — and you may be right. If you're unsure about a grammar question, consult the corresponding section of this book or other grammar handbooks.

- The Final Dress Rehearsal
- The Proof Is in the Reading

**Definition:**

A word or phrase that shows how the meaning of one sentence is related to the meaning of the preceding sentence.

Though important for establishing **cohesion** in a text, transitional expressions can be overused as well as used too little.

See also:

- Coherence
- Transition
- Cohesion Strategies: Transitional Words and Phrases
- Cohesion Exercise: Combining and Connecting Sentences


- Sample Example Paragraphs: [Junk Food Junkie](#) and [Confessions of a Slob](#)

**Examples and Observations:**

- "Far to his left, in the northeast, beyond the valley and the terraced foothills of the Sierra Madre Oriental, the two volcanoes, Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl, rose clear and magnificent into the sunset. Nearer, perhaps ten miles distant, and on a lower level than the main valley, he made out the village of Tomalín, nesting behind the jungle, from which rose a thin blue scarf of illegal smoke, someone burning wood for carbon. Before him, on the other side of the American highway, spread fields and groves, through which meandered a river, and the Alcapancingo road." (Malcolm Lowry, *Under the Volcano*)

- "Learn to alert the reader as soon as possible to any change in mood from the previous sentence. At least a dozen words will do the job for you: 'but,' 'yet,' 'however,' 'nevertheless,' 'still,' 'instead,' 'thus,' 'therefore,' 'meanwhile,' 'now,' 'later,' 'today,' 'subsequently,' and several more. I can't overstate how much easier it is for readers to process a sentence if you start with 'but' when you're shifting direction. . . .

  "Many of us were taught that no sentence should begin with 'but.' If that's what you learned, unlearn it--there's no stronger word at the start." (William Zinsser, *On Writing Well*, Collins, 2006)

- "Do not be too self-conscious about plugging in transition words while you are drafting sentences; overuse of these signals can seem heavy-handed. Usually, you will use transitions quite naturally, just where readers need them." (Diana Hacker, *The Bedford Handbook*, 2002)

**Also Known As:** transition, transitional word, signal word

**Definition:**

The connection (a word, phrase, clause, sentence, or entire paragraph) between two parts of a piece of writing, contributing to **cohesion**.

Transitional devices include **pronouns**, **repetition**, and **transitional expressions**.

See also:
Coherence

Cohesion Strategies: Repetition of Key Words and Structures
Cohesion Strategies: Transitional Words and Phrases
Spacing

Etymology:

From the Latin, "to go across"

Examples and Observations:

- **Transitional Words and Phrases**
  "At first a toy, then a mode of transportation for the rich, the automobile was designed as man's mechanical servant. Later it became part of the pattern of living."

- **Repetition**
  "The way I write is who I am, or have become, yet this is a case in which I wish I had instead of words and their rhythms a cutting room, equipped with an Avid, a digital editing system on which I could touch a key and collapse the sequence of time, show you simultaneously all the frames of memory that come to me now, let you pick the takes, the marginally different expressions, the variant readings of the same lines. This is a case in which I need more than words to find the meaning. This is a case in which I need whatever it is I think or believe to be penetrable, if only for myself."
  (Joan Didion, *The Year of Magical Thinking*, 2006)

- **Pronouns and Repeated Sentence Structures**
  "Grief turns out to be a place none of us know until we reach it. We anticipate (we know) that someone close to us could die, but we do not look beyond the few days or weeks that immediately follow such an imagined death. We misconstrue the nature of even those few days or weeks. We might expect if the death is sudden to feel shock. We do not expect this shock to be obliterative, dislocating to both body and mind. We might expect that we will be prostrate, inconsolable, crazy with loss. We do not expect to be literally crazy, cool customers who believe that their husband is about to return."
  (Joan Didion, *The Year of Magical Thinking*, 2006)
• **Tips on Using Transitions**
  "After you have developed your essay into something like its final shape, you will want to pay careful attention to your transitions. Moving from paragraph to paragraph, from idea to idea, you will want to use transitions that are very clear--you should leave no doubt in your reader's mind how you are getting from one idea to another. Yet your transitions should not be hard and monotonous: though your essay will be so well-organized you may easily use such indications of transitions as 'one,' 'two,' 'three' or 'first,' 'second,' and 'third,' such words have the connotation of the scholarly or technical article and are usually to be avoided, or at least supplemented or varied, in the formal composition. Use 'one,' 'two,' 'first,' 'second,' if you wish, in certain areas of your essay, but also manage to use prepositional phrases and conjunctive adverbs and subordinate clauses and brief transitional paragraphs to achieve your momentum and continuity. Clarity and variety together are what you want."  

• **Space Breaks as Transitions**
  "Transitions are usually not that interesting. I use space breaks instead, and a lot of them. A space break makes a clean segue whereas some segues you try to write sound convenient, contrived. The white space sets off, underscores, the writing presented, and you have to be sure it deserves to be highlighted this way. If used honestly and not as a gimmick, these spaces can signify the way the mind really works, noting moments and assembling them in such a way that a kind of logic or pattern comes forward, until the accretion of moments forms a whole experience, observation, state of being. The connective tissue of a story is often the white space, which is not empty. There’s nothing new here, but what you don’t say can be as important as what you do say."  