Reef Connections

Track how transitions link ideas in an informational model text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2c "Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline every transition word or phrase in the passage. Above each one, write the relationship it shows: order, contrast, example, result, condition, addition, or reason.

How Reefs Change

1. Coral reefs are built by tiny animals called polyps. Although reefs cover less than 1 percent of the ocean floor, they provide shelter and food for many sea creatures. First, polyps make hard skeletons from minerals in seawater. Over time, new polyps grow on older skeletons. As a result, a reef can slowly form near a warm, sunny coast. For example, branching corals create spaces where young fish can hide safely there.

2. However, reefs can lose color when water stays unusually warm. Corals contain tiny algae that use sunlight to make food. When heat stresses the coral, it may push out these algae. Consequently, the coral turns pale or white, a change called bleaching. The coral is not always dead after bleaching, but it has less food. If cooler water returns soon, the algae may return, and the coral can recover. Otherwise, long-lasting heat can cause the coral to die.

3. Scientists and local communities can reduce some dangers to reefs. For instance, towns can treat wastewater before it reaches the sea, which keeps extra nutrients out of coastal water. In addition, boaters can use mooring buoys instead of dropping anchors on coral. These actions protect reefs from nearby pollution and damage. However, protecting reefs also requires cutting greenhouse gas emissions, because warmer oceans cause more bleaching. Therefore, choices made far from the coast can still affect a reef.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which transition phrase in paragraph 1 introduces an example of how a reef helps young fish?

2. What relationship does “As a result” show in paragraph 1? Explain the two connected ideas.

3. What relationship does “If cooler water returns soon” show in paragraph 2?

4. How do “However” and “Therefore” clarify the ideas in paragraph 3?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly three sentences explaining how people can protect a local pond, park, or stream. Use at least three transition words or phrases: one that gives an example, one that shows contrast, and one that shows a result.

ANSWER KEY

Reef Connections

GRADE 6 · W.6.2c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline every transition word or phrase in the passage. Above each one, write the relationship it shows: order, contrast, example, result, condition, addition, or reason. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which transition phrase in paragraph 1 introduces an example of how a reef helps young fish?	**For example.**
2	What relationship does "As a result" show in paragraph 1? Explain the two connected ideas.	**It shows a result: polyps growing on older skeletons can lead to a reef slowly forming.**
3	What relationship does "If cooler water returns soon" show in paragraph 2?	**It shows a condition: the algae may return and the coral may recover only if cooler water returns soon.**
4	How do "However" and "Therefore" clarify the ideas in paragraph 3?	**"However" contrasts local reef protection with the need to cut greenhouse gas emissions. "Therefore" shows the result that choices far from the coast can affect a reef.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

For example, volunteers can plant native grasses along the pond, so rain carries less soil into the water. However, plants alone cannot solve every problem, because litter can still harm wildlife. Therefore, visitors should place trash in bins to help keep the pond healthy.

Accept accurate labels for transition relationships when students can explain the connection between ideas. For the writing task, look for exactly three connected sentences and transitions that clearly signal example, contrast, and result.