

HUNTER COLLEGE WRITING CENTER

THE WRITING PROCESS

Organization: Cohesion

Cohesion, literally “sticking” together, is essential to good, clear expository writing. It helps a reader follow your argument and see the relationships you want them to see. Cohesion makes writing flow by creating and reinforcing connections between words, ideas, and sentences. Cohesion in writing is achieved in a variety of ways, mainly by using words and phrases that act as connectors or point back to earlier words/ideas. The most basic cohesive devices are **Reference words**, **Transitions**, and **Repetition**

Reference words point to a specific thing or to a location in space or time.

Definite articles: the, this, that, these

Pronouns: he, she, him, her, his, they, them, their, it

Place and time markers: now, later, here, there, yesterday

Transitions connect sentences, showing relationships between ideas or clarifying the progression of an argument.

Adverbs: however, moreover, additionally

Phrases: as a result, on the other hand, from my point of view

Clauses: since I was a child, when disaster strikes, if all this is true

Logical markers: first, second, next, finally

Modifying phrases: having given this some thought, taking everything into consideration)

Repetition emphasizes and maintains prominence of key words or ideas.

In the passage below, the cohesive devices have been underlined and defined. Notice how much repetition and reference there is in even a relatively short piece of writing.

Early Political Parties

Many differences existed between the two earliest political parties in the United

KEY WORD

KEY PHRASE

States, the Federalist Party and the Republican Party. For one thing, the Federalists

KEY WORD REPETITION

KEY WORD REPETITION

TRANSITION

REPETITION

favored a loose interpretation of the Constitution. Although the Constitution does not

KEY TERM

REPETITION

specifically mention a bank, for instance, the Federalists argued that the power to

KEY PHRASE

REPETITION

KEY PHRASE

establish one is implied. The Republicans, on the other hand, believed in a strict

PRONOUN

REPETITION

TRANSITION

interpretation of the Constitution; they felt that only in extreme circumstances would it

REPETITION

PRONOUN

be acceptable to assume the power for establishing a bank. A second, and perhaps more

REPETITION

REPETITION TRANSITION

significant, difference between the two parties involved their attitudes toward the

REPETITION

REPETITION

structure of the government itself. The Federalists believed in a strong central

KEY WORD

REPETITION

government geared to serving the interests of the few. Conversely, the Republicans

REPETITION

TRANSITION

REPETITION

supported the concept of a weak centralized government, with its powers distributed

REPETITION

among the many. This difference resulted from what was perhaps the most fundamental

DEF. ARTICLE / REPETITION

dissimilarity between the parties. The “rich, wise and well-born” were basically

REPETITION

Federalists. They felt that the average citizen was incapable of governing intelligently.

REPETITION

PRONOUN

KEY PHRASE

The Republicans, for their part, were average citizens. Thus the difference in

REPETITION

PRONOUN

REPETITION

TRANSITION

REPETITION

background and philosophy of the members of the two parties underlay their different

REPETITION

PRONOUN/ REPETITION

attitudes toward specific activities of the government and toward the very nature of government.

REPETITION

REPETITION