

Transitions will be especially important in this essay because you are comparing things within one paragraph

resented
having to
give my horse away

(a) the childhood memory, belief, though

realize

(b) what you realize now as a wiser, more experienced person
now it was as hard on my parents
to have to watch me lose that companion pet - didn't sell her to hurt me but
did it out of necessity (moving)

Then transitions of time

Then
Before ...
I used to think ...
At that time ...
Previously ...
My younger self thought
When I was young,
In the past,
Back then,

Then

- relationship w/ Gramma - loved her but hated being at her home. Felt tense - always yelling
- Swimming as a kid - care free, playful, interactive w/ others
- Banana bike parade day - won a prize for best decorated bike
- riding trails w/ my brother on building hay forts in the barn loft
- Struggled so much in school in math & spelling - jealous of brother's ease in school - embarrassed at being slow/weak

Now Transitions of time

Now, ...
Here, today I see ...
I realize now that ...
Today, ...

My current self realizes
At last ...
Now wiser, I see that ...
In the present,

Now

- realize now felt tense at her home b/c she was deaf and her kids yelled at her when speaking (and they were rude to her) - not about me.
- solitary activity now, much less carefree, for different purpose now
- today realize how I craved praise - lower self esteem b/c of school
- today not as close at all - shared childhood memories but distant lives from each other as adults
- today realize strengths (+) weaknesses of learners. Brain function - not value

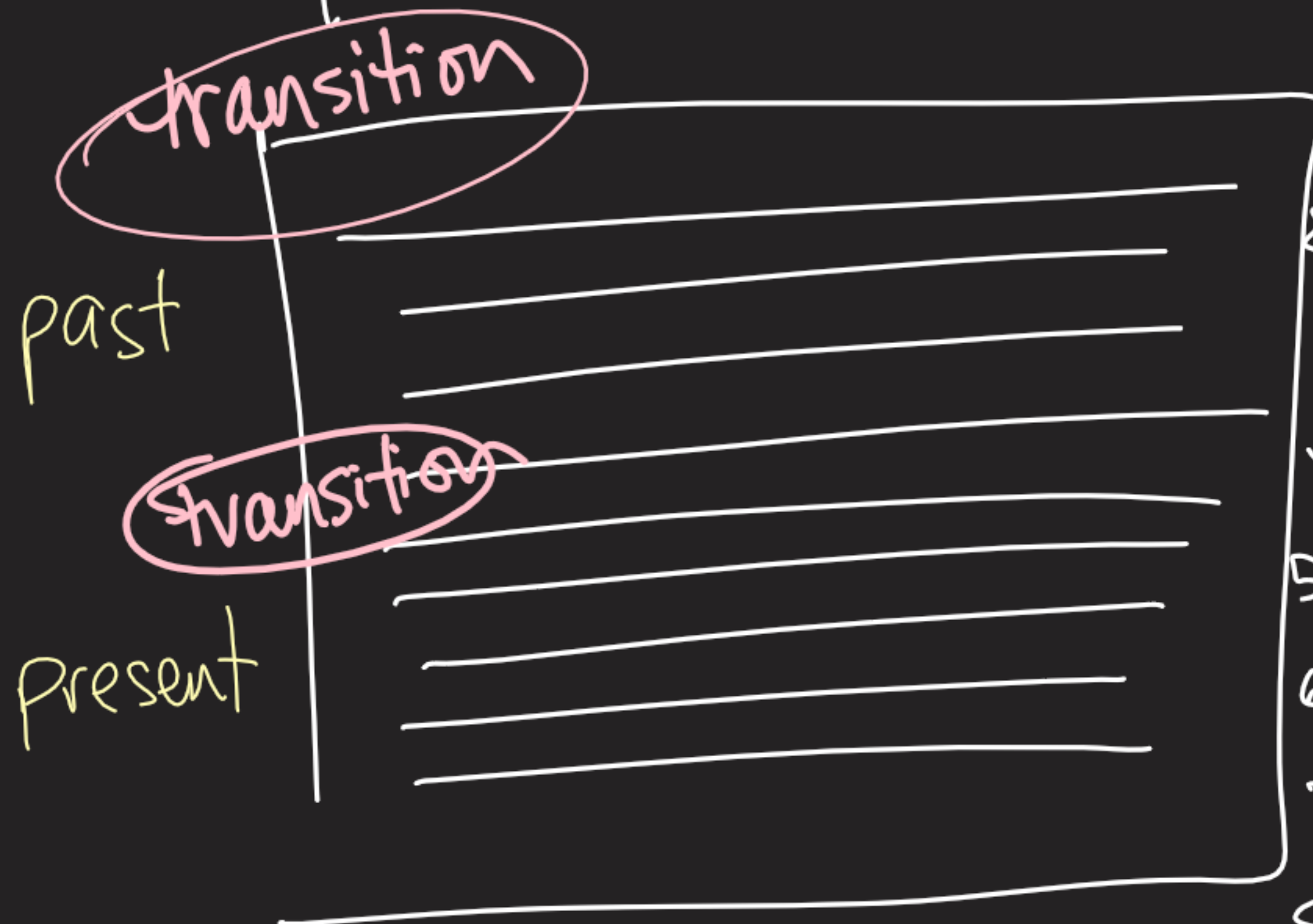
In Reflective Essay - body paragraph writing:

- Keep the comments of the past grouped together
 - well developed

* transition into your observations of the present realization

- keep comments/observations of the present:
 - grouped also together
 - well developed

body paragraph



1. topic sentence
2. background to the topic
3. example of a moment from the past
4. what it meant to you then + why
5. transition into a new, wiser understanding
6. why you see it / understand it differently now
7. an example of something recent that proves the new thinking
8. explain / elaborate on growth / realization
9. summarize paragraph

transitions are essential in this type of essay!

Reflecting on the past, I understand what people mean when they say siblings are among the most important people in life. Since I grew up on the farm, I did not spend much time with my friends, my sisters were the friends I played with regularly. We did literally almost everything together when we were kids, both work and play, from forking out the barn to jumping on the bales. Now, my older sister is gone to University and is only home on weekends, so we hardly get to see each other. When she is at home my younger sister and I are busy with sports or helping with the cows, while she usually does homework. We do not get to spend nearly as much time together as we used to. The saddest part is that as we get older and our lives grow apart, we will spend less and less time in each others' company. This is the disappointing reality that things will never be the way they used to be between my sisters and I.

Weaknesses:

- vague reflections (generalized)
- could be improved by including specific memories (anecdotes)
- mostly stating facts - should develop more of the realization (the lesson learned)
- sentence structure is fair, though less complex than this level of writing should be

Strengths:

- good use of transitions
 - organization of past/present is clear
- Level 3 of 5

Past

I always dreamed about growing up and working when I was little, but now that I have to it is a whole different perspective. Having a job seemed like it was the coolest thing ever when I was little; I could not wait to work and make my own money to buy so many cool things- just like every other adult. As a little kid, I always had my specific careers picked out while going through many different phases - first wanting to be a fashion designer, a vet, a photographer, all leading up to being a lawyer. Realistically, now that I do have a summer job, as a lifeguard, I wish that I was a kid again and did not have to work or worry about being like every grown up. Looking back, I know now that being little does not mean having to worry about being like an adult and working, but spending time doing things you love as a kid. Most importantly, I have lots of time to work, now that I am older and I have my whole life ahead of me, so at that period of time I did not need to worry about having a job when I was a child.

Weaknesses:

- slightly better reflections (generalized)
- could be improved by including specific memories (anecdotes)

Strengths:

- good realizations developed
- good use of transitions - though somewhat repetitive
- reflections grouped first, then realizations (not a lot of back and forth of the message - good)
- sentence structure is more varied and complex (more appropriate to this development level)

Level 3.5 of 5

Realizations

Comparison

Sequence transition ✓

Another experience that has changed is the view of my class, more specifically, my classmates. Since I am from a small town, we do not have many students in our school, and me being from a farm with two older sisters, I never travelled to other towns much. As a result, I had always thought that I should stay away from the icky boys, appreciate with the friends my mom gave me, and that I had such a huge class. The funny thing is, we probably had a maximum of ten students in my grade, and we were split with around ten students from the grade above us. In fact, mostly every town around us has more than twenty students per grade, especially the city schools. Now, I hang out with all of my classmates, regularly catch up with my friends that have moved, and I befriend anyone I can, male or female. Not being friends with many people when I was younger was a hindrance on my social life now that cannot be undone. This is yet another memory that I have messed up, switched around, even "fudged up". I wonder how many other memories I have like this, ones I have twisted around.

Weaknesses:

- could include a specific anecdote (memory of the past as support)
- summary sentence(s) are off topic (need to remain specific to this paragraph topic)

Strengths:

- unique phrasing and language (personable)
- the realization is good - recognizing the impact of the past on their present
- begins with a transition of sequence for the essay (1 of 3 body paragraphs)
- some good use of transitions of time
- good organization of present/past
- Sentence complexity/variety is good

Level 4.25 of 5

X Summary sent - bit off topic of paragraph.

Memories can often work as chains; one memory unlocks the next, in much the same way that long grass reminds me of swimming in my youth. In actuality, the long grass reminds me of the short, prickly grass that grew rampant on the shore where I took my swimming lessons many years ago. This shoreline, mind you, was some way from my home, though both were near the water, and seemed vastly different to me. Truth be told, I hated the public swimming lessons, not being able to swim where, when, or how I wanted to, and not, to my mind, really learning anything. Invariably, swimming at home, alone, only under the eyes of a parent, was far more enjoyable, though I had rarely considered why. Now, it seems quite clear that the reason I so disliked swimming lessons was that they were a damper on personal choice, and that swimming at home represented relative freedom, not only being able to perform whatever method of swimming that I wanted to, but being able to learn from personal experience; to impress myself instead of having the answers handed to me. Was I a slightly less developed swimmer than most at the time? Probably, though perhaps I derived more satisfaction from swimming than most others did, and long grass, when I think about it, reminds me of this.

Weaknesses:

- should begin with a sequence transition - one of the topics considered in this essay

Strengths:

- the writing is very personal, using unique language
- sentence structure is quite varied & developed
- the meaning in what's written is more valuable to a reader (realization of the writer more developed)
- strong use of past/present transitions and quite varied
- topic and summary sentence match topics and not repetitively

Level 4.5 - 4.8 of 5

