

Presentation Signposting

Linking Your Ideas and Guiding the Audience

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson aims

- Learn signposting phrases that tell the audience where you are in a presentation
- Use linking words to add, contrast and show cause and result
- Choose the correct pattern after linkers (because / because of, although / despite)
- Open, move through and close a short talk with clear, natural language

Warm-up: talk about it

- Think of a talk you found easy to follow. How did the speaker show you where they were in the talk?
- What happens when a speaker moves from one point to another without any warning?
- Which phrases do you already use to start, link and finish a talk?

1. Key vocabulary

Opening and outlining

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
to begin with	as the first point or the first step	To begin with, I'll give you a short overview.
overview	a short general description of the whole talk	I'll start with an overview of the project.
cover	include a topic in your talk	Today I'm going to cover three areas.
agenda	the list of topics in the order you will talk about them	Here is the agenda for the next fifteen minutes.
touch on	mention a topic briefly	I'll only touch on the costs today.
first of all	before anything else	First of all, thank you all for coming.

Moving on

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
move on to	go to the next part of the talk	Now let's move on to the results.
turn to	start talking about a new topic	Let's turn to the question of cost.
that brings me to	the last point leads naturally to the next one	That brings me to my second point.
next	after this	Next, I'd like to look at the timeline.
let's look at	begin to examine something	Let's look at the figures for March.
so far	up to this point in the talk	So far I've talked about the problem.

Looking back and ahead

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
as I mentioned earlier	as I said before in this talk	As I mentioned earlier, the deadline cannot change.
as you can see	pointing to something on a slide	As you can see, sales rose in May.
I'll come back to this	you will return to the topic later	I'll come back to this point at the end.
in a moment	very soon	I'll explain how it works in a moment.
earlier	before now in the talk	We saw earlier that costs are falling.
later	after now in the talk	I'll give you more detail later.

Adding and contrasting

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
in addition	and also (adds another point)	In addition, the new system is easier to use.
what's more	and this is even more important	What's more, it is cheaper.
for example	used to give one case that explains a point	Many tasks are automatic. For example, the report is sent every Friday.
however	but (shows a different or opposite idea)	The plan is good. However, it is expensive.
on the other hand	used to give the opposite side of an argument	Email is fast. On the other hand, it is easy to miss.
in contrast	used to show that two things are very different	Sales rose in the north. In contrast, they fell in the south.

Cause and result

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
as a result	because of this (shows the result)	The data was late. As a result, the report was delayed.
therefore	for that reason (formal)	The costs are high. Therefore, we need a new supplier.
for this reason	because of what I just said	For this reason, I recommend option B.
this means that	this has the following result	This means that we save two hours a week.
because of	used before a noun to give the reason	We changed the date because of the holiday.
despite	used before a noun to show a surprising contrast	Despite the delay, the team finished on time.

Summing up

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
to sum up	used to start a short summary	To sum up, there are three main points.
in conclusion	used to introduce the last part	In conclusion, I recommend the new system.
overall	thinking about everything together	Overall, the results are positive.
the key point is	the most important idea is	The key point is that training saves time.
let me finish by	used to say you are nearly at the end	Let me finish by thanking the team.
recommendation	advice about what to do	My recommendation is to start in January.

Linking patterns: clause or noun?

Pattern	Use
because + clause	because the data was late
because OF + noun	because of the late data
although + clause	although the data was late
despite + noun / -ing	despite the late data
as a result, + clause	As a result, the report was late.
as a result OF + noun	as a result of the late data
in addition, + clause	In addition, the figures were wrong.
in addition TO + noun / -ing	in addition to the wrong figures

2. Useful signposting phrases

Purpose	Useful phrases
Starting	Let me start by explaining... First of all, I'd like to... Today I'm going to cover three areas. I'll begin with the background.
Moving on	Now let's move on to... That brings me to my next point. Turning to the costs, ... Let's look at ... next.
Looking back and ahead	As I mentioned earlier, ... I'll come back to this later. As you can see on this slide, ... We'll look at that in more detail in a moment.
Finishing	To sum up, ... Let me finish by saying... So, the key point is... Thank you. I'm happy to take questions.

3. Model talk

Listen to (or read) an extract from a short talk. A team leader is proposing a change to the weekly report. Notice how the signposts and linking words guide the audience. Underline the vocabulary from Section 1.

OPENING

Good morning, everyone. Today I'm going to talk about how we write our weekly report. To begin with, I'll give you a short overview of the problem, then I'll show you a possible solution, and finally I'll make a recommendation.

PROBLEM

Let's start with the problem. At the moment, each person sends their figures by email. This means that someone has to copy everything into one file, and that takes about three hours every week.

PROBLEM

Despite our best efforts, mistakes happen. For example, last month two numbers were wrong. As a result, the managers received the report a day late.

SOLUTION

That brings me to my second point: the solution. I'd like to propose a shared online dashboard. As I mentioned earlier, the report takes three hours now. With a dashboard, it would take about twenty minutes.

SOLUTION

In addition, everyone would see the figures at the same time. What's more, the system is cheaper than we expected. On the other hand, the team will need two hours of training.

COSTS

Now let's look at the costs. As you can see on this slide, the first year costs about five hundred euros. I'll come back to the training plan in a moment.

TIMELINE

Turning to the timeline, we could start in November because of the quiet period. So far, I've covered the problem, the solution and the cost.

CLOSING

To sum up, the dashboard saves time, reduces mistakes and costs very little. Overall, I think it is a good investment. My recommendation is to start a trial next month. Thank you. I'm happy to take questions.

Exercise 1: Signposts in context

Type the missing word. The first letter is given to help you.

1. As I mentioned e_____, the new system will save us two hours a week.
2. The new system is easy to use. In a_____, it is much cheaper than the old one.
3. Good morning. t_____ begin with, I'll give you a short overview of the project.
4. The system is much cheaper. On the o_____ hand, it takes longer to learn.
5. We were late with the data. t_____, the report was delayed by a day.
6. We have discussed the cost. That b_____ me to my second point: the timeline.
7. That is an interesting question. I'll come b_____ to it at the end of the talk.
8. To s_____ up, we have three key points: speed, cost and safety.

Exercise 2: Choose the correct linker

Choose the correct linker. Check whether a noun or a clause follows the gap.

in addition to because of although instead of because despite

1. We decided to buy the system _____ it was expensive.
2. The meeting was cancelled _____ the weather was bad.
3. The new system reduces errors, _____ saving a lot of time.
4. We chose this room _____ it has a good projector.
5. We decided to buy the system _____ the high cost.
6. The meeting was cancelled _____ the bad weather.
7. We will use email _____ paper forms, so nobody needs to print anything.
8. She presented very well _____ feeling nervous.

Exercise 3: Find and fix the mistake

Each sentence has one mistake in the highlighted part. Type the correct word.

1. Now let's **pass** on to the next section. Correction: _____
2. **Like** I said earlier, the deadline cannot change. Correction: _____
3. **Despite** the system is fast, it is difficult to learn. Correction: _____
4. In **conclude**, I recommend the second option. Correction: _____
5. The first option is cheap. In **contrary**, the second option is very expensive. Correction: _____
6. Prices rose sharply. **Because**, we changed supplier. Correction: _____

Exercise 4: What does it do?

Read what the phrase does. Choose the correct word or phrase.

1. Used to remind the audience of something you said before
 - a) as I mentioned earlier
 - b) that brings me to
 - c) I'll come back to this later
 - d) to begin with
2. Used to add one more point
 - a) as a result
 - b) in addition
 - c) to sum up
 - d) however
3. Used to show an opposite or different idea
 - a) therefore
 - b) for instance
 - c) in addition
 - d) on the other hand
4. Used to start your final summary
 - a) to sum up
 - b) in contrast
 - c) in addition
 - d) as I mentioned earlier
5. Used to give one case that explains your point
 - a) however
 - b) therefore
 - c) for instance
 - d) overall
6. Used to show the result of something
 - a) for example
 - b) as a result
 - c) on the other hand
 - d) in addition

Exercise 5: Sort the phrases

Choose the group that each phrase belongs to.

A Looking back and ahead	B Cause and result	C Opening and outlining
D Moving on	E Summing up	F Adding and contrasting

1. "to begin with" **Group:** ____
2. "that brings me to" **Group:** ____
3. "on the other hand" **Group:** ____
4. "as I mentioned earlier" **Group:** ____

5. "for this reason" **Group:** ____
6. "what's more" **Group:** ____
7. "to sum up" **Group:** ____
8. "as a result" **Group:** ____

Exercise 6: Build the sentence

Put the words in the correct order to make a sentence.

1. **to / me / of / most / my / the / part / talk. / important / That / brings**

2. **takes / other / it / time / system / fast, / to / is / The / the / but / learn. / on / hand**

3. **you / I'll / a / overview / To / the / begin / project. / give / with, / of / short**

4. **To / points / key / sum / one / recommendation. / and / clear / have / three / we / up,**

5. **we / next / move / on / need / delay, / section. / of / to / the / to / Because / the**

6. **saves / two / week. / hours / mentioned / new / the / a / earlier, / process / As / I**

Exercise 7: Best phrase for the situation

Choose the most suitable thing to say in a professional presentation.

1. You want to show that falling sales caused a decision.
 - a) Sales fell by ten percent. In contrast, we need a new plan.
 - b) Sales fell by ten percent. As a result, we need a new plan.
 - c) Sales fell by ten percent. Overall, because new plan.
 - d) Sales fell by ten percent. For example, we need a new plan.
2. You want to remind the audience of an earlier point.
 - a) Again the deadline thing.
 - b) I said it, so remember it.
 - c) As I mentioned earlier, the deadline cannot change.
 - d) You forgot the deadline, didn't you?
3. Someone asks about training, but you will cover it later in the talk.
 - a) Good question. I'll come back to that in the next section.
 - b) Don't ask that yet.
 - c) Wait, I'm talking now.
 - d) That is not in my slides.

4. You have finished the costs and want to start talking about the timeline.
- a) Finished with costs, who cares.
 - b) Okay, so, timeline.
 - c) Next thing, the timeline thing.
 - d) Now let's move on to the timeline.
5. You are about to start the last part of your talk.
- a) And that's all, I think.
 - b) To sum up, there are three main points to remember.
 - c) So yes, the end, thank you, bye.
 - d) Finally, I'll quickly say again everything I said.
6. You want to compare two options, one cheaper and one faster.
- a) Option A is cheaper. On the other hand, Option B is faster.
 - b) Option A is cheaper. For example, Option B is faster.
 - c) Option A cheap, Option B fast, both.
 - d) Option A is cheaper, because Option B is faster.

Exercise 8: Complete the sentence

Choose the best word or phrase to complete each sentence.

1. We have covered the background. Now let's _____ to the results.
- a) turn
 - b) finish
 - c) sum
 - d) begin
2. The training was short. _____, most people felt confident afterwards.
- a) Therefore
 - b) However
 - c) For example
 - d) In addition to
3. _____ the high cost, the project was approved.
- a) Because
 - b) Therefore
 - c) However
 - d) Despite
4. The printer broke. _____, the handouts were late.
- a) However
 - b) Although
 - c) As a result
 - d) In contrast

Exercise 9: Say it yourself

Write one or two sentences for each situation, as if you were speaking. Use language from this lesson.

1. Finish your talk: give a summary signpost and your recommendation.

2. You have finished the problem and want to start the solution. What do you say?

3. Open your talk: say what it is about and how it is organised.

4. One option is cheap but slow. The other is fast but expensive. Compare them.

Your turn: propose a change at work

Choose a small change you would like to propose (a new tool, a new schedule or a new process). Write one or two sentences for each step, using at least eight signposts or linkers from this lesson. Then give your talk for about two minutes and record yourself if you can.

1. Opening - Say what the talk is about and how it is organised (to begin with, first, then, finally).

2. The problem - Describe the present situation and give one example (for example, this means that).

3. Transition - Move to your solution (That brings me to..., Now let's move on to...).

4. The solution - Explain your idea. Add one more advantage (in addition, what's more).

5. Contrast and result - Mention one disadvantage (however, on the other hand) and one result (as a result).

6. Close - Summarise (To sum up...), make your recommendation and invite questions.

Self-check

- ☐ I used at least eight signposts or linkers from the lesson.
- ☐ I told the audience how my talk is organised.
- ☐ I used a clear transition between the problem and the solution.
- ☐ I used the correct patterns (because of + noun, although + clause, despite + noun).
- ☐ I finished with a summary, a recommendation and an invitation for questions.

TEACHER ANSWER KEY - DO NOT DISTRIBUTE**Presentation Signposting: Linking Your Ideas and Guiding the Audience (Level B1+)**

The worksheet order is fixed; answers below follow the printed numbering. The interactive HTML version shuffles item order and answer positions each time it is opened.

Exercise 1: Signposts in context

1. earlier (also accept: before)
2. addition
3. to
4. other
5. therefore (also accept: consequently, thus)
6. brings
7. back
8. sum

Exercise 2: Choose the correct linker

1. although; 2. because; 3. in addition to; 4. because; 5. despite; 6. because of; 7. instead of; 8. despite

Exercise 3: Find and fix the mistake

1. Now let's **move** on to the next section. (accept: move / go)
2. **As** I said earlier, the deadline cannot change. (accept: As)
3. **Although** the system is fast, it is difficult to learn. (accept: Although)
4. In **conclusion**, I recommend the second option. (accept: conclusion)
5. The first option is cheap. In **contrast**, the second option is very expensive. (accept: contrast)
6. Prices rose sharply. **Therefore**, we changed supplier. (accept: Therefore)

Exercise 4: What does it do?

1. a; 2. b; 3. d; 4. a; 5. c; 6. b
1. 'I'll come back to this later' looks forward, not back.
2. 'In addition' means 'and also'.
3. 'On the other hand' introduces the opposite side of the argument.
4. 'To sum up' tells the audience that you are finishing.
5. 'For instance' and 'for example' introduce an example.
6. 'As a result' shows what happened because of the first idea.

Exercise 5: Sort the phrases

1. C (Opening and outlining); 2. D (Moving on); 3. F (Adding and contrasting); 4. A (Looking back and ahead); 5. B (Cause and result); 6. F (Adding and contrasting); 7. E (Summing up); 8. B (Cause and result)

Exercise 6: Build the sentence

1. That brings me to the most important part of my talk.
2. The system is fast, but on the other hand it takes time to learn.
3. To begin with, I'll give you a short overview of the project.
4. To sum up, we have three key points and one clear recommendation.
5. Because of the delay, we need to move on to the next section.
6. As I mentioned earlier, the new process saves two hours a week.

Exercise 7: Best phrase for the situation

1. b; 2. c; 3. a; 4. d; 5. b; 6. a
1. 'As a result' links a cause to its result.

2. 'As I mentioned earlier' is a polite way to refer back.
3. Be polite, praise the question and say when you will answer.
4. A clear signpost tells the audience that a new section is starting.
5. A short summary phrase prepares the audience for the end.
6. 'On the other hand' is correct for contrasting ideas. 'Because' and 'for example' do not fit.

Exercise 8: Complete the sentence

1. a; 2. b; 3. d; 4. c

1. 'Turn to' is a signpost for a new topic.
2. A short course and confident staff is a surprising contrast, so 'however' fits.
3. 'Despite' is followed by a noun phrase and shows a surprising contrast.
4. The broken printer caused the delay, so we need a result linker.

Exercise 9: Say it yourself

1. Model: To sum up, the new system saves time and money. My recommendation is to start a trial next month. (Start with 'To sum up' or 'In conclusion', then give your recommendation.)
2. Model: That brings me to the solution. Now let's look at what we can do. (Use a signpost: Now let's move on to... / That brings me to...)
3. Model: Today I'm going to talk about our meeting schedule. First I'll explain the problem, then I'll suggest a solution. (Use a structure phrase: first, then, finally.)
4. Model: The first option is cheap but slow. On the other hand, the second option is fast but expensive. (Use 'on the other hand', 'however' or 'in contrast'.)

Accept any accurate, natural sentence that uses suitable language from the lesson.

Teacher notes

- Suggested timing (60 minutes): warm-up 5 min; vocabulary groups 15 min (students sort the phrases into the six groups first); model talk (listen, then read, then underline every signpost) 10 min; exercises 1 to 5 in class 20 min; exercises 6 to 9 for homework or the next lesson; 'Your turn' task as a speaking activity with feedback.
- Grammar focus: 'because' and 'although' are followed by a clause; 'because of' and 'despite' are followed by a noun or -ing form. Drill with transformations: 'Although it was expensive, we bought it' to 'Despite the high price, we bought it'.
- Punctuation and register: linkers such as 'however', 'therefore' and 'as a result' usually start a new sentence and are followed by a comma. 'Therefore' is more formal than 'so'. Encourage 'As a result' and 'for this reason' in spoken presentations.
- Common B1 errors: 'In contrary' (in contrast / on the contrary); 'Like I said' in a formal talk (as I said); 'Despite the system is fast' (although); 'Because, we changed' (therefore); 'In conclude' (in conclusion).
- Pronunciation to check: word stress on conCLUtion, recommenDAtion, aDItion (stress on the second syllable: a-DI-tion) and 'overall'. Practise a short pause after signposts such as 'However,' and 'To sum up,'.
- Extension: ask the student to give the two-minute talk twice. After the first attempt, note which signposts she used and which she missed, then ask her to repeat it using three new ones.