

Achieving Cohesion: Making Words and Sentences Stick Together

Cohesion refers to the specific ways in which writers guide readers through a piece of writing. Cohesion techniques include choosing certain words and constructing sentences that stick together.

Make Word Choice Cohesive: There are FOUR specific ways you can choose to achieve cohesion in a piece of writing: Word Repetition, Synonyms, Pronouns, and Determiners.

Word Repetition: This method includes both exact repetition and the use of different grammatical forms of the same key word.

Synonyms For Key Words and Phrases: Writers sometimes will try to avoid overusing repetition by substituting close synonyms, words or phrases that mean about the same thing.

Pronouns: Writers will use pronouns of various types to refer to the noun or noun phrases elsewhere in the text. Like using synonyms, this is a way to maintain connections between ideas without repeating the same noun phrase.

Determiners: Like pronouns, determiners refer to a specific noun phrase in the text. These words are often articles but are sometimes “limiting adjectives”

Application:

Look over your draft, at this point, and mark the following (using the highlighter function/comment function in MS Word):

- Mark various cohesive devices used within and between sentences and paragraphs
- Mark various transitional words and phrases within and between sentences and paragraphs
- Consider specific areas where revising to include cohesive devices and transitions would strengthen the overall coherency and cohesion (and, subsequently, the clarity of your draft at this point)