Lesson 3: Follow the Signs

UNIT: Earth Explorers

TRANSCRIPT

HOOK 1

Hi, writers. It's Margaret. I want to tell you about a time I went on a hike near my house.

I started at the visitor center in the park. To get started, I found a signpost that says, "Hike begins this way" So I followed the signpost and found the trail.

Along the hike, I saw amazing trees and awesome views. And then I came across another signpost. It said, "Hike continues this way." So I followed the signpost and continued down the trail. I saw amazing birds and the rushing river.

Eventually, I came across another sign that said, "End of hike." Before I knew it, I was back at the visitor center.

I got to see lots of amazing things on my hike, but I also saw three signposts along the way.

DISCUSSION 1

Discuss: Why do you think these signs are helpful for hikers?

HOOK 2

Maybe you said that "The signs can help hikers so they know where to go and they don't get lost." Or maybe you said, "The signs help people know what's coming next on the hike." You may have said something else, and that's great.

The signposts on this hike really helped me out. It felt like they were guiding me through the hike, so I always knew where to go and what was coming next.

Words can help guide people on a hike, but they can also help guide people in a piece of writing.

You're working on a piece of writing to display at the visitor center in Lucy's town. You're writing a poster that will teach visitors all about either the Firefall or the Sky Mirror.

As a writer, you can include words and phrases that guide your readers through your writing, just like the signposts guided me on my hike. But writers don't put actual signs in their writing. That would look pretty silly. Instead, writers use transition phrases that let readers know where the writing is going next.

Check out how Lucy is using transition phrases in her paragraph about the sailing stones. Lucy learned that the sailing stones move really slowly, only about one inch per minute.

She's going to write a detailed sentence with this information. She used a transition phrase and a detail from her notes. Lucy wrote, "One fact is the sailing stones only move about one inch per minute." Lucy wants to add a second detail to her writing. She learned that no one knew how the sailing stones moved until scientists figured it out in 2014.

Here are some transition phrases that Lucy could use to start her sentence.

DISCUSSION 2

Discuss: Try using these transition phrases to make a sentence with this fact. You can try more than one.

HOOK 3

Any of these transition phrases would be great choices for this sentence.

Transition phrases help guide your reader through your writing by letting them know what's coming next.

Some transition phrases let your reader know you're just getting started, like this: "One fact is the sailing stones only move about one inch per minute."

Some transition phrases let the reader know you're going to add more, like this: "Additionally, the mystery of the sailing stones was not solved until 2014."

And some transition phrases let the reader know they're almost at the end, like this: "Finally, the sailing stones are located at the Racetrack playa."

Today, you'll write a second paragraph for your poster at the visitor center. You'll follow the same paragraph structure as before starting with a topic sentence and three or more detailed sentences. You can use transition phrases to help guide your reader through the paragraph, like signposts along the way.

I'll get you started, step by step.

STEP 1

Get your supplies.

STEP 2

In today's lesson, you'll need someone to share ideas with. This could be a partner or someone you sit near. When everyone knows who their talk partner is, move on to the next step.

STEP 3

Get your Explorer Notes worksheet.

Fold your worksheet so that the place you circled is face up on your desk.

You already wrote a paragraph about how the Firefall or the Sky Mirror works. You'll use your other notes today to write your second paragraph.

Read your notes quietly to yourself. When you're done, show a silent thumbs up.

STEP 4

Get your Paragraph 2 worksheet. To start your paragraph, you can begin with a topic sentence.

Your topic sentence needs to tell your reader that this paragraph will be about lots of facts or things to learn.

Here's what Lucy wrote as her topic sentence: "There are lots of amazing facts to learn about the sailing stones."

Write your topic sentence starting at the arrow. You can use Lucy's topic sentence or come up with your own.

STEP 5

Before you write your details, let's practice combining a transition phrase with a fact.

Set up your desk like this with your Paragraph 2 worksheet on the left and your Notes on the right. You can put your Explorer Information to the side for now.

Look at the "Getting Started" section of your worksheet. Choose one of the transition phrases you would like to use. Put your finger on the one you picked.

STEP 6

Now take a look at your Explorer Notes.

Choose which detail you would like to write about first, and put your other finger on that detail.

Think silently about how you could start a sentence with your transition phrase and finish it with your detail. You might need to add extra words so that it makes sense.

STEP 7

Take turns sharing your sentence out loud with your partner starting with your transition phrase and ending with your fact.

STEP 8

Write the sentence you said to your partner. Begin writing where you left off.

STEP 9

Now you can add another detail sentence.

Before you do, you can let your reader know you're about to share a second detail. Pick a transition phrase from the "Adding more" section of your worksheet.

Write that transition phrase to start your next sentence and use another detail from your notes to finish the sentence. Remember, you can always go back to your Explorer Facts if you need more information.

STEP 10

Now you can write the rest of your paragraph. You can keep using the transition phrases at the start of each sentence to let your reader know you're going to add more.

When you're ready to write your last detail, use a transition phrase from the ending section so your reader knows they are almost at the end of the paragraph.

Your teacher will tell you how long you have to write.

STEP 11

Take turns reading your paragraph out loud to your partner. If you want, you can make changes.

WRAP UP

Fantastic job, writers! You wrote a second paragraph for your poster at the visitor center. Along the way, you used transition phrases to guide your reader through your writing. People who read your poster will be so excited to learn all these facts about the Firefall or the Sky Mirror.

In the next lesson, you'll write an introduction for your poster to get everyone curious about the mystery of your amazing place.

Then, in later lessons, you can build your poster to set up the mystery and reveal everything that you've learned.

Remember to put your V.I.P.s somewhere safe, and I'll see you next time.