



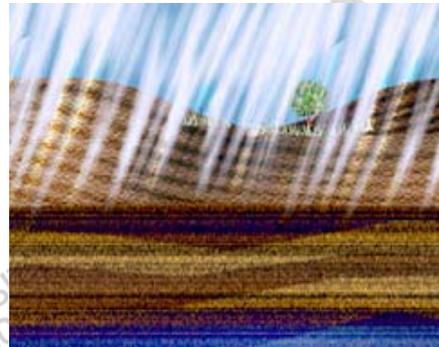
Hello, I'm Margot Politis. Welcome to Study English, IELTS preparation.

Today we're going to see an animation about a process called 'salinity', that's where land becomes damaged by too much salt.

We'll be looking at language you can use to describe processes, including *transition signals*. Listen for how the process of salinity is described here.

One of the main causes of salinity is waterlogging. First, land is cleared for crops to grow. Now, instead of trees pumping the water out of the ground, and keeping the salt stored, whatever water the crops don't use percolates down into the soil.

Gradually, over a number of years, the earth gets wetter and wetter, and eventually it waterlogs. Then, the water table starts to rise to the surface. As it rises, it dissolves the tonnes of salt stored in the soil.



Once the water table comes to within two metres of the surface, it begins to evaporate. Lastly, the sun extracts the moisture from the ground, leaving the salt concentrated on the surface.

The first casualties of this dramatic land change, and the dry land salinity that it causes, are ecosystems.

We heard a description of a *process*. A process has a number of steps from beginning to end.

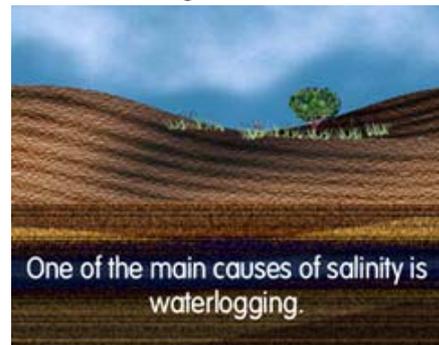
When describing a process, the first sentence, or 'topic sentence', should tell us what the main idea of the paragraph is, and what the process is leading to.

Listen to the topic sentence.

One of the main causes of salinity is waterlogging.

'One of the main causes of salinity is waterlogging.'

This topic sentence tells us that the paragraph is about 'salinity', that is, land becoming salty.



And the sentence tells us that one of the main causes of this problem is 'waterlogging'.

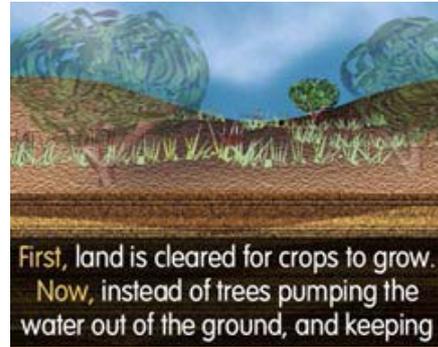
So from this sentence, we expect that the paragraph will be about the process of land becoming waterlogged, leading to salinity.



When we describe a process, it is important that the reader understands when each part of the process happens, what order things happen in.

Listen again to the passage, and watch for the words that order the stages of the process.

First, land is cleared for crops to grow. Now, instead of trees pumping the water out of the ground, and keeping the salt stored, whatever water the crops don't use percolates down into the soil.



Gradually, over a number of years, the earth gets wetter and wetter, and eventually it waterlogs. Then, the water table starts to rise to the surface. As it rises, it dissolves the tonnes of salt stored in the soil.

Once the water table comes to within two metres of the surface, it begins to evaporate.

Lastly, the sun extracts the moisture from the ground, leaving the salt concentrated on the surface.

She uses a range of *transition signals* to order the stages of the process.

One type of transition signal is ordinal numbers. Listen.

One of the main causes of salinity is waterlogging. First, land is cleared for crops to grow.

The *ordinal numbers* are 'first', 'second', 'third', 'fourth' and so on.

These ordinal numbers can be used as adjectives to form phrases describing order.

We can either just start the sentence with:

'First,'

'Second,'

or we can use them in phrases like these:

'The first step is';

'The second stage begins when';

'The third part is'.





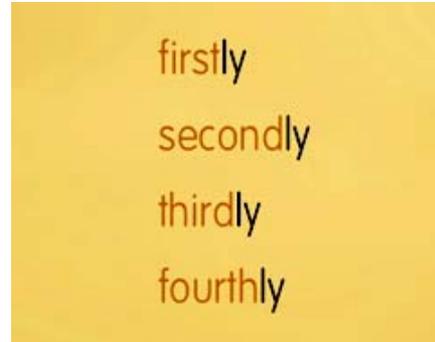
We can also add 'ly' to ordinal numbers to make adverbs:

'firstly', 'secondly', 'thirdly', 'fourthly', etc.

Using these words is a very common and simple way of ordering stages in a process.

You can also use them to organise any group of ideas, examples or points in an argument.

Another type of transition signal is time phrases she uses is *time phrases*.



**Gradually, over a number of years, the earth gets wetter and wetter,**

'Gradually, over a number of years, the earth gets wetter and wetter.'

The phrase 'Gradually, over a number of years', tells us that this part of the process takes place 'gradually', 'slowly', 'over a number of years', 'over many years'.

It is a long, slow process.

'Over a number of years' is a *time phrase*. Using time phrases helps to make the descriptions of processes clearer.

Other useful time phrases you might come across are:

'At this stage,'

'During this process,'

'After several days,'

All of these phrases tell us when, or for how long, that stage in the process takes place.

Listen again.

**Then the water table starts to rise to the surface. As it rises, it dissolves the tonnes of salt stored in the soil.**

She says 'as it rises'.

The word 'as' tells us that two actions are taking place together, or simultaneously.

While the water table is rising to the surface, it dissolves the salt.

Other phrases indicating two actions taking place at the same time could be 'at the same time', 'meanwhile'.

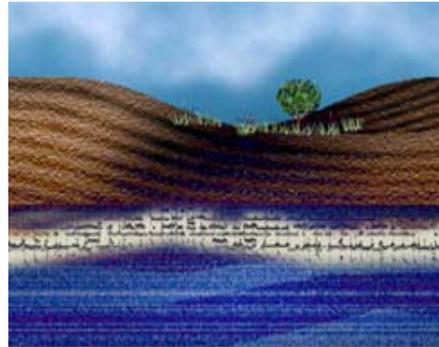


There are some other adverbs you can use as transition signals. Which ones were used in the passage?

Listen.

Now, instead of trees pumping the water out of the ground, and keeping the salt stored, whatever water the crops don't use percolates down into the soil.

Gradually, over a number of years, the earth gets wetter and wetter, and eventually it waterlogs. Then, the water table starts to rise to the surface. As it rises, it dissolves the tonnes of salt stored in the soil.



She uses the *adverbs* 'now', 'eventually', 'then' and 'lastly'.

These all help to order events.

There are many other adverbs to choose from. Make sure you use a wide variety of them in your writing and speaking, rather than just repeating the same ones.

Others include: 'finally', 'subsequently', 'later', 'afterwards'.

OK. We're going to finish today by looking at some *pronunciation*.

There are a number of English words that can be used as both *nouns* and *verbs*.

However, in many cases, the pronunciation of these changes. This can be quite difficult to get used to.

Listen to the word 'extracts' in the passage.

Lastly, the sun *extracts* the moisture from the ground, leaving the salt concentrated on the surface.

'The sun *extracts* the moisture.'

'Extracts' here comes from the verb 'to extract'.

Where is the emphasis, or stress in this word?

It's on the second syllable 'exTRACT'.

But 'extract' is also a noun.

When it's a noun, it's pronounced 'EXtract'. The emphasis is now on the first syllable.



And this pattern of first syllable emphasis for the noun form, and second syllable emphasis for the verb form, is repeated with other words.

We have:

to 'exTRACT' and an 'EXtract';

'to conTRACT' and a 'CONtract';

to 'consTRUCT' and a 'CONStruct';

and there are lots of others.

We have 'PROduce', that you eat, and 'to proDUCE', to make.

We have 'SUBject' and 'Object', but 'subJECT' and 'obJECT'.

Let's test you. Try reading these sentences.

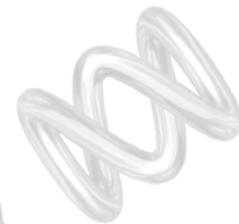
'He objected to the subject of the lesson.'

'The farm produced fresh produce.'

So you can see how the stress in words can change meaning. You'll have to practice whenever you can!

And after all that, it must be time to go. See you next time on Study English.

Bye bye.



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