

Pivotal Words

No words are as helpful while reading as the prepositions and conjunctions that guide your mind along the pathways of the author's ideas. A word like furthermore says, "Keep going!" However says, "Easy!" Master these words and phrases and you will almost immediately become a better reader, for they will whisper directions in your inner ear.

Additive words

These say, "Here's more of the same coming up. It's just as important as what we have already said."

also	besides	furthermore	moreover
and	further	in addition	too

Equivalent words

They say, "It does what I have just said, but it does this too."

as well as	at the same time	similarly
equally important	likewise	

Amplification words

The author is saying, "I want to be sure that you understand my idea; so here's a specific instance."

for example (e.g.)	specifically	as
for instance	such as	like

Alternative words

These point out, "Something there is a choice; other times there isn't."

either/or	neither/nor	other than	otherwise
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Repetitive words

They say, "I said it once, but I'm going to say it again in case you missed it the first time."

again	to repeat	in other words	that is (i.e.)
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Contrast and change words

"So far I've given you only one side of the story; now let's take a look at the other side."

but	in spite of	even though	regardless
conversely	on the contrary	notwithstanding	whereas
despite	on the other hand	still	
however	instead of	though	
nevertheless	rather than	yet	

Cause and effect words

"All this has happened; now I'll tell you why."

accordingly	consequently	since	hence	thus
because	for this reason	so	then	therefore

Qualifying words

These say, “Here is what we can expect. These are the conditions we are working under.”

if	although	unless
providing	whenever	

Concession words

They say, “Okay! We agree on this much.”

accepting	of course
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Emphasizing words

They say, “Wake up and take notice!”

above all	more important	indeed
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Order words

The author is saying, “You keep your mind on reading: I’ll keep the numbers straight.”

finally	second	then
first	next	last

Time words

“Let’s keep the record straight on who said what and especially when.”

afterwards	formerly	meanwhile	ultimately	presently
before	later	subsequently	now	previously

Summarizing words

These say, “We’ve said many things so far. Let’s stop here and pull them together.”

for these reasons	in brief
in conclusion	to sum up