

Reading and Listening Clues

Many words and phrases provide clues to important ideas in college reading and listening. Recognizing these clues will increase your ability to spot main points in lectures and textbooks.

Additive Words and Phrases

Additive words and phrases communicate that **more of the same is coming** of equal importance.

- **also, and, another, besides, further, furthermore, in addition, moreover**

Alternative Words and Phrases

These words & phrases indicate **choices or differences** or that there aren't choices or differences.

- **the difference, either, neither, nor, or, other than, otherwise, similarly**

Repetitive Words and Phrases

Repetitive words and phrases **emphasize ideas** that are so important that they are repeated directly or paraphrased.

- **again, in other words, that is (i.e.), to repeat**

Cause and effect words and phrases **indicate of relationships between events or ideas**.

- **accordingly, as a result, because, consequently, for this reason, the outcome is, since, so, then, therefore, thus**

Contrast/Change Words and Phrases

These words and phrases **suggest similar or opposing circumstances**.

- **but, conversely, despite, even though, however, in contrast, in spite of, instead of, nevertheless, notwithstanding, rather than, regardless, similarly, still, though, whereas, yet**

Qualifying Words and Phrases

Qualifying words and phrases **modify the conditions which affect important ideas or situations**. There are two kinds: *absolute* and *sometimes* words. Absolutes mean 100% of the time and sometimes words mean undefined portions or numbers of times.

1. Absolute Words and Phrases

- all, always, ever, every time, forever, never, no, no one, none, only

2. Sometimes Words and Phrases

- few, many, most, nearly always, occasionally, some, sometimes, somewhat, usually

Emphasis Words and Phrases

These clues indicate a **degree of importance** of ideas and events in relation to each other.

- above all, a central fact, the crux, key idea, less important, less so, main point, more importantly, most important, of significance

Time and Order Words and Phrases

Time and order words and phrases **indicate specific organization patterns of ideas**. Many times, order is crucial to an accurate understanding of ideas or events.

- afterwards, before, finally, formerly, last, later, meanwhile, next, now, presently, previously, second, then, ultimately

Summarizing Phrases

Summarizing phrases **indicate important ideas will be reviewed**.

- for these reasons, in brief, in conclusion, to review, to sum up