The 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
- further
- moreover
- and
- furthermore
- too
- besides
- in addition

**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 "Sometimes there is a choice; other times there isn't."

- either/or
- other than
- neither/nor
- otherwise

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

**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
- on the contrary
- still
- conversely
- on the other hand
- yet
- despite
- instead of
- though
- however
- rather than
- regardless
- nevertheless
- even though
- whereas
- in spite of
- notwithstanding
Cause and effect words
"All this has happened; now I'll tell you why."
- accordingly
- since
- then
- because
- so
- thus
- consequently
- hence
- therefore
- for this reason

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 the data
- granted that
- of course

Emphasizing words
They say "Wake up and take notice!"
- above all
- more important
- indeed

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
- meanwhile
- now
- before
- subsequently
- presently
- formerly
- ultimately
- previously
- later

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