The Pivotal Words

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

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
- conversely
- despite
- however
- nevertheless
- in spite of
- on the contrary
- still
- on the other hand
- instead of
- rather than
- even though
- notwithstanding

Cause and effect words
"All this has happened; now I'll tell you why."
- accordingly
- because
- consequently
- for this reason
- since
- so
- hence
- then
- thus
- 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 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

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