

Cohesive Devices: Signposting

Just like street signs that help you find your way, signposts in a text show how ideas in one clause, sentence, or paragraph relate to ideas in other parts of the text. For instance, signposting may be used to mark text that is creating a list, showing a contrast, or contributing support to a claim. Signposts are usually adverbs or adverbials that appear at the beginning of a sentence (often the first sentence of a paragraph), followed by a comma. Here are some examples of different kinds of signposting phrases categorized by their functions.

Adding Points:

in addition, moreover, furthermore, additionally, also, besides, what is more, apart from this

Comparing & Contrasting:

likewise, similarly, in the same way, on the contrary, on the other hand, yet, whereas, alternatively, nevertheless, however, nonetheless, in contrast, conversely, compared to/with, even though, although, despite, in spite of

Explaining, Clarifying, or Giving Evidence:

for example, for instance, that is to say, in other words,

Referring to Another Point in the Text:

as noted above, as stated above, as discussed above, as stated earlier, as will be addressed below

Specifying or Focusing:

in terms of, with regard to, with respect to, in particular, namely, to put it more simply

Summarizing or Concluding:

in summary, to conclude, in conclusion, in a nutshell, to sum up,

Sequencing or Listing:

first off, to begin with, firstly, secondly, lastly, finally

Showing Cause & Effect:

because, hence, therefore, as a result, consequently, thus, so, accordingly, due to

Indicating Time Relationships:

eventually, after all, meanwhile, in the meantime, initially, finally, next, subsequently, after that, in the end, in the final account