Signal Words—Words the Author Uses to Tell the Reader How to Read

1. Continuation signals (Warning—there are more ideas to come):
   - and
   - also
   - again
   - and finally
   - a final reason
   - furthermore
   - last of all
   - likewise
   - moreover
   - next
   - other
   - secondly
   - too
   - with
   - another
   - first of all
   - in addition
   - more
   - one reason
   - similarly

2. Change-of-direction signals (Watch out—we're doubling back):
   - although
   - but
   - conversely
   - despite
   - different from
   - even though
   - however
   - in contrast
   - instead of
   - in spite of
   - nevertheless
   - otherwise
   - the opposite
   - on the contrary
   - on the other hand
   - rather
   - still
   - yet
   - while
   - though

3. Sequence signals (There is an order to these ideas):
   - first, second, third
   - A, B, C
   - in the first place
   - for one thing
   - then
   - next
   - before
   - now
   - after
   - while
   - into (far into the night)
   - until
   - last
   - during
   - since
   - always
   - o'clock
   - on time
   - later
   - earlier

4. Illustration signals (Here's what that principle means in reality):
   - for example
   - specifically
   - for instance
   - to illustrate
   - such as
   - much like
   - in the same way as
   - similar to

5. Emphasis signals (This is important):
   - a major development
   - it all boils down to
   - a significant factor
   - most of all
   - a primary concern
   - most noteworthy
   - a key feature
   - more than anything else
6. **Cause, condition, or result signals** (Condition or modification coming up):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signal Word</th>
<th>Signal Word</th>
<th>Signal Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a major event</td>
<td>pay particular attention to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a vital force</td>
<td>remember that</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a central issue</td>
<td>should be noted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a distinctive quality</td>
<td>the most substantial issue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above all</td>
<td>the main value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>especially important</td>
<td>the basic concept</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>especially relevant</td>
<td>the crux of the matter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>especially valuable</td>
<td>the chief outcome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>important to note</td>
<td>the principal item</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. **Spatial signals** (Answers the “where” question):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signal Word</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between</td>
<td>on</td>
<td>by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>here</td>
<td>there</td>
<td>left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>right</td>
<td>these</td>
<td>close to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>near</td>
<td>this</td>
<td>side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle</td>
<td>west</td>
<td>beside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>east</td>
<td>about</td>
<td>north</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>around</td>
<td>over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under</td>
<td>away</td>
<td>in front of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>across</td>
<td>into</td>
<td>behind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toward</td>
<td>beyond</td>
<td>above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below</td>
<td>opposite</td>
<td>upon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outside</td>
<td>inside</td>
<td>alongside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over</td>
<td>out</td>
<td>far</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in</td>
<td>adjacent</td>
<td>near</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. **Comparison-contrast signals** (We will now compare idea A with idea B):

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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>or</td>
<td>also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>too</td>
<td>best</td>
<td>most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>either</td>
<td>less</td>
<td>less than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>even</td>
<td>then</td>
<td>half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much as</td>
<td>like</td>
<td>analogous to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td>different from</td>
<td>still</td>
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<tr>
<td>yet</td>
<td>however</td>
<td>although</td>
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<td>while</td>
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<tr>
<td>though</td>
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</table>
9. Conclusion signals (This ends the discussion and may have special importance):
as a result consequently finally
from this we see in conclusion in summary
hence last of all therefore

10. Fuzz signals (Idea not exact, or author not positive and wishes to qualify a statement):
almost if looks like
maybe could some
except should alleged
nearly might reputed
seems like was reported proportioned
sort of probably

11. Nonword emphasis signals
exclamation point (!)
underline
italics
centon
subheads, like The Conclusion
indention of paragraph
graphic illustrations
numbered points (1, 2, 3)
very short sentence: Stop war.
"quotation marks"