Knowing the pattern of an article, essay, or textbook chapter aids comprehension. For each kind of writing certain clue words, also called linking and transition words, are used. They signal the direction the writer is taking. For example, when writing an essay with a contrast pattern the clue words would include “in contrast,” “although,” “conversely,” and “however”. For another example, writing to emphasize a point is often presented with clue words such as “again,” “as a
matter of fact,” and “for this reason.” Below is a list of common clue words used for various patterns in writing. Note: a passage could include more than one pattern (Exercise 3.1 includes examples of this).

**Lists of Common Clue Words (Linking/Transition)**

**Clue Words to Show Addition**
- additionally
- also
- and
- another
- besides
- finally
- first
- second
- (etc.)
- further
- furthermore
- incidentally
- lastly
- likewise
- moreover
- next
- too
- along with
- as well as
- equally important
- in addition
- what's more.

**Clue Words to Show Time**
- about
- after
- afterward
- at
- before
- currently
- during
- eventually
- finally
- first
- (etc.)
- following
- formerly
- immediately
- later
- meanwhile
- next
- next week
- previously
- soon
- subsequently
- then
- thereafter
- until
- today
- when
- after a few hours.

**Clue Words to Show Location**
- above
- across
- adjacent
- against
- along
- among
- around
- behind
- beneath
- beside
- between
- beyond
- by
- down
- inside
- into
- here
- near
- nearby
- off
- onto
- outside
- over
- there
- throughout
- under
- away from
- at the side
- in the back
- in back of
- in the foreground
- on top of
- to the right
- (etc.).

**Clue Words to Show Comparison**
- also
- as
- like
- likewise
- meanwhile
- similarly
- simultaneously
- after all
- at the same time
- by and large
- in comparison
- in the same way
- in the same manner.

**Clue Words to Show Contrast**
- although
- but
- conversely
- however
- nevertheless
- nonetheless
- otherwise
- still
- true
- yet
- or
- and yet
- even though
- in contrast
- on the contrary
- on the other hand
- while this is true.

**Clue Words to Emphasize a Point**
- again
- obviously
- truly
- undoubtedly
- as a matter of fact
- for this reason
- in fact
- to emphasize
- to repeat.

**Clue Words to Clarify**
- for instance
- in other words
- put another way
- that is.

**Clue Words to Give Examples**
- namely
- specifically
- as an illustration
- for example
- to demonstrate
- to illustrate.

**Clue Words to Introduce as a Result**
- accordingly
- consequently
- so
- therefore
- thus
- as a result
- due to this.

**Clue Words to Show Cause and Effect**
- if
- then
- this led to
- for this reason
- caused
- not only but also
- which led to.

**Clue Words to Introduce Conclusions**
- accordingly
- consequently
- finally
- hence
- so
- therefore
- thus
- as a result
- in brief
- in conclusion
- in short
- in summary
- on the whole
- to conclude.

**NOTE:** this is not an exhaustive list, of course, and as you have noticed, various words and expressions can work for more than one pattern of writing, so they illustrate just one strategy to help reading comprehension.

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Exercise 3.1 is a treasure hunt for determining genre by recognizing clue words.

**UNIT 3, EXERCISE 3.1**

For each selection, determine which pattern of writing it is and list the clue word or words. There may be more than one pattern in each selection. The paragraphs are numbered for convenience.

"How to Overcome Writer’s Block"

by Hamlin Snakebite

1. First, you might work on another piece of writing for a while, something completely different. For example, if you are writing an adventure, switch to writing a meat recipe or a report on the life cycle of the billy goat.

Pattern(s)_____________________________________________
Clue word(s)_________________________________________

2. It is also good to keep in mind something my mother also used to say: “Weak muscles equal weak minds.” Take a walk, ride a bike, or mud wrestle.

Pattern(s)_____________________________________________
Clue word(s)_________________________________________

3. Lastly, instead of thinking typical writer’s block thoughts, for example, “I will never EVER be able to write another
word,” or “I SHOULD have gone to taxidermy school,” etc., replace them with more peaceful thoughts, or hum peaceful tunes, or read through Stedman Nimblebody’s *Taxidermy Through the Ages*. After reading that book chances are you will soon nod off, thus easing your worried mind for a little while, anyway.

Pattern(s)__________________________________________________
Clue word(s)_______________________________________________

4. Draw pictures of the characters, setting, and scenes in your story. This might make them more real as well as giving you more ideas for what to do next. It might also cause new appreciation for writing because you might soon realize you stink at art, therefore you’ll want to get back to your story as soon as possible.

Pattern(s)__________________________________________________
Clue word(s)_______________________________________________

5. Take two complete days off and do things you don’t normally do. Watch cartoons and eat gummy bears, take pies to shut-ins, or enter a ping-pong tournament.

Pattern(s)__________________________________________________
Clue word(s)_______________________________________________

6. Listen to some music, but try to match the music with the kind of writing you are working on. For example, if it’s a mystery, pick something dark and worrisome with lots of organ music and cymbal crashing. If you are working on a peaceful scene, listen to something like “Flora Featherly's Greatest Oboe Hits,” or something with a lot of flutes. If it’s a romance, find an orchestral piece loaded with violins written in the nineteenth century. But if you are a writing crime detective drama, plug into a few tunes from the Goth-rock band “Shrapnel,” in particular anything on their latest CD, “Scream Bloody Murder”. Not only will it put you in the mood for blood, guts and gore but also it will likely keep you up nights out of fear–thus giving you more time to write!

Pattern(s)__________________________________________________
Clue word(s)_______________________________________________

Besides clues to help you determine the pattern or genre of a reading selection, there are clues to help you figure out the meaning of specific words that are unfamiliar to you. Here are the five most common:

1. **Definition/Explanation Clues**: sometimes the meaning of a word or phrase is given right after its use.
   Example: *Taxidermy*, the art of preparing, stuffing, and mounting the skins of animals (especially vertebrates) for display or for other sources of study, is popular among museum curators.

2. **Restatement/Synonym Clues**: sometimes a word is presented in a simpler way.
   Example: Stuffing dead animals has been a dream of Stedman Nimblebody, author of *Taxidermy Through the Ages*, ever since his pet snake died when Steddie was six years old. He still misses Mr. Scaly Face.

3. **Contrast/Antonym Clues**: sometimes the meaning of a word is clarified by presenting a word or phrase opposite of its meaning.
   Example: Little Steddie wanted to visit the Taxidermy Museum but the rest of the family preferred a trip to the Zoo to see live animals.

4. **Inference/General Context Clues**: sometimes the meaning of a word or phrase is in the surrounding sentences, or must be inferred or implied by the general meaning of a selection.
   Example: When Steddie finally got the chance to visit the Taxidermy Museum, he was very excited. He even found a stuffed snake that looked exactly like Mr. Scaly Face! “Just think,” he exclaimed to his parents, “If Mr. Scaly Face was stuffed, I could still tease the cat and the dog with him!”

5. **Punctuation**: the correct use of punctuation helps a reader get the meaning of a term, phrase, or thought. Likewise, incorrectly placed or missing punctuation sometimes gives an entirely different and incorrect meaning across.
   Example: Missing punctuation: Is it time to eat Grandma?
   Corrected: Is it time to eat, Grandma?

UNIT 3, EXERCISE 3.2

There are many examples online of [punctuation errors in signs](https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Education_and_Professional_Development/Book%3A_How_to_Learn_Like_a_Pro/) that change the meaning. Create a chart such as the one below for 5 of the signs that you really like.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT THE SIGN SAYS</th>
<th>WHAT THE SIGN REALLY MEANS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>