

- 1 These phrases indicate an important point.
The main/important point/conclusion/reason ...
The point to note here ...
Above all ...
- 2 Sometimes we are told how many important points to expect.
 For example:
There are three major reasons ...
- 3 Important points may be highlighted using *italics*, **bold type** or CAPITALS.
*An important requirement for development is **freedom from debt**.*
 In this example the word order also emphasises the phrase in bold type. Compare it to:
***Freedom from debt** is an important requirement for development.*
- 4 *But* and *however* often indicate an important contrast, qualification or correction. For example:
The rising birth rate is not due to increased fertility, but to a sharp decline in the death rate.
- 5 Asking a question in a text is a way of highlighting the answer that follows. For example:
Why is a piped water supply so important? Disease due to contaminated water is a common cause of death in childhood.
- 6 A writer may repeat an important point to make sure it is understood. For example:
Death control can be achieved autonomously. In other words, the death rate can be cut without anything else changing.
- 7 Conclusions are usually important. Look out for signposts such as:
therefore the result
in conclusion we can conclude
one of the primary conclusions
- 8 Examples are usually less important, although a key example can help you to remember a main point. Examples are signposted by phrases such as:
for example/instance like
such as these include
to illustrate among these are
 They may also be shown simply by punctuation. For example,
The developing countries are dependent on cash crops – sugar, coffee, cacao, cotton.
Precipitating factors are those which reduce the food supply (droughts, floods, wars, epidemics) ...

The main reason for the reduction in the death rate in the developing world has been improved public health measures. **For example**, in Sri Lanka the death rate was halved over ten years by spraying the mosquitoes which carry malaria. **Why** is it so easy to cut the death rate in this way and yet so hard to reduce the birth rate? **One answer**

is that public health measures can be very cheap. Anti-malarial spraying is inexpensive. **But this is not the important point.** For birth control programmes to be successful, a change in attitude is required whereas death control can be achieved autonomously. **In other words**, the death rate can be cut without anything else changing.