

Alert Words for Classroom Discussions

Ellis, E.S. (1989). A metacognitive intervention for increasing class participation.
Learning Disabilities Focus, 5(1), p. 38.

This reading strategy designed to increase students' ability to participate in classroom discussions. Teachers need to instruct students to attend to different words or phrases that may be signaling different things. Understanding these will enable students recognize relationships in given information and gain better comprehension.

Alert words that may be signaling that reasons are being offered:

because	deduct	effect	explanation
purpose	reasons	since	therefore

Alert words that may be signaling that examples of things/ideas are being offered:

example	instance	model	pattern
sample	type		

Alert words and phrases that may be signaling that things/ideas are being compared:

associated	contrast	differences	with relation to
opposite	parallel	resemblance	similarities
on the other hand . . .			

Alert words and phrases that may be signaling that main idea statements are being offered:

basically . . .	driving at . . .	drift is . . .	in essence . . .
in conclusion . . .	in summary . . .	key point . . .	the gist is . . .
significance of this is . . .		the most important . . .	

Alert words that may be signaling that lists of important information are being offered:

categories	characteristics	classes	divisions
features	first, second, etc.	groups	kinds
many	members	parts	roles
steps	stages	ways	