

Name _____

Date _____

Textual Clues

Definition

Textual clues are words, phrases, or elements within text that help readers understand meaning, make predictions, or draw conclusions. These clues guide comprehension by signaling relationships or indicating important information.

Example

Type	Example	Purpose
Signal words	"however," "therefore," "in contrast"	Show relationships between ideas
Text features	headings, subheadings, bold text	Highlight important information
Context clues	surrounding words explaining unfamiliar terms	Define unknown vocabulary
Transition words	"first," "next," "finally"	Show sequence or organization
Punctuation	quotation marks, em dashes, parentheses	Indicate special text functions

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Part 1: Multiple Choice Questions

Read the following passages about Yellowstone's geothermal features and identify the textual clues that help you understand the information.

1. "Yellowstone National Park sits on top of a supervolcano. Unlike typical volcanoes that form cone-shaped mountains, this supervolcano creates a large caldera or basin. As a result, the park features numerous geothermal wonders rather than a single volcanic peak."

Which textual clues signal a relationship between ideas in this passage?

- a) "Yellowstone National Park" and "supervolcano"
- b) "Unlike" and "As a result"
- c) "supervolcano" and "caldera"
- d) "geothermal wonders" and "volcanic peak"

2. "Old Faithful geyser is Yellowstone's most famous geothermal feature. This predictable geyser erupts approximately every 90 minutes, shooting water up to 185 feet into the air. The reliability of these eruptions is due to its particular underground plumbing system."

Which textual clue helps define why Old Faithful is considered "famous"?

- a) The italicized name "Old Faithful"
- b) The mentioning of "185 feet into the air"
- c) The bolded sentence about predictable eruptions
- d) The phrase "geothermal feature"

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3. "Geologists monitor Yellowstone's geothermal activities carefully. First, they measure ground deformation using GPS stations. Next, they track earthquake swarms which may indicate magma movement. Finally, they analyze gas emissions from fumaroles to detect changes in the underlying magma chamber."

What textual clues indicate the sequence of steps in the monitoring process?

- a) "carefully," "indicate," and "detect"
- b) "Geologists," "earthquake swarms," and "fumaroles"
- c) "First," "Next," and "Finally"
- d) "measure," "track," and "analyze"

Part 2: Fill in the Blank

Identify the type of textual clue used in each excerpt about Yellowstone's geothermal features.

1. "The Yellowstone Caldera formed approximately 640,000 years ago during a massive volcanic eruption. In fact, this prehistoric event was more than 1,000 times larger than the Mount St. Helens eruption of 1980."

Type of textual clue: _____

2. "Norris Geyser Basin features acidic waters and consistently changing features. The basin contains Steamboat Geyser—the world's tallest active geyser—which can shoot water more than 300 feet high during major eruptions."

Type of textual clue: _____

3. "What causes Yellowstone's remarkable geothermal activity? The answer lies beneath the surface, where a massive magma chamber heats groundwater to extreme temperatures."

Type of textual clue: _____

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Textual Clues – Answer Key

Part 1: Multiple Choice Questions

- 1.b) "Unlike" and "As a result" (these are signal words showing contrast and cause-effect relationships)
2. c) The bolded sentence about predictable eruptions (explains why it's famous - its predictability)
3. c) "First," "Next," and "Finally" (transition words indicating sequence)

Part 2: Fill in the Blank

1. Type of textual clue: Signal phrase/emphasis clue ("In fact" emphasizes and elaborates on the previous statement)
2. Type of textual clue: Em dashes/parenthetical information (em dashes set off additional descriptive information)
3. Type of textual clue: Rhetorical question and answer (question followed by explanation)
4. Type of textual clue: Text formatting/organizational feature (bullet points and bolded terms create a structured list)
5. Type of textual clue: Cause and effect signal word ("Since" shows causal relationship between time elapsed and potential future eruption)