

Name _____

Date _____

Textual Clues

Definition

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

Example

Type of Clue	Examples	Purpose
Signal words	"however," "therefore," "in contrast"	Show relationships between ideas
Text features	headings, subheadings, bold text	Highlight important information
Context clues	surrounding words that explain unfamiliar terms	Help define unknown vocabulary
Transition words	"first," "next," "finally"	Show sequence or organization
Punctuation	quotation marks, em dashes, parentheses	Indicate special meaning or emphasis

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PART 1: Identify the Type of Textual Clue

Read each passage about Han Dynasty silk production and identify the type of textual clue underlined. Choose from: signal words, context clues, transition words, punctuation, or text features.

1. The silk workers cultivated mulberry trees because silkworms fed exclusively on their leaves.

Type: _____

2. Han Dynasty silk—prized throughout the ancient world—was traded along routes extending to Rome.

Type: _____

3. Sericulture, the art of raising silkworms for silk production, was a closely guarded secret.

Type: _____

4. First, cocoons were sorted by quality. Next, they were boiled to loosen the fibers. Finally, workers carefully unwound the delicate threads.

Type: _____

5. The Han Dynasty developed specialized implements for silk processing.

Type: _____

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PART 2: Multiple Choice

Choose the sentence that contains the type of textual clue indicated in parentheses.

1. (SIGNAL WORDS)

- a) Silk workers extracted the fibers carefully to prevent breakage.
- b) The silk thread was extremely fine; however, it was surprisingly strong.
- c) Merchants transported silk across vast distances to foreign markets.
- d) The Han Emperor wore brilliant yellow silk robes during ceremonies.

2. (CONTEXT CLUES)

- a) The cocoons were immersed in hot water to soften the sericin, the natural glue binding silk fibers.
- b) Women worked long hours in imperial silk workshops.
- c) Red silk was reserved for high-ranking officials.
- d) Han Dynasty silk reached Europe through the famous trade routes.

3. (TRANSITION WORDS)

- a) Silk was used to create beautiful garments and banners.
- b) Initially, workers sorted the cocoons by color and quality; subsequently, they began the boiling process.
- c) Silk fabric was stored in cedar chests to protect from insects.
- d) Merchants paid high prices for Chinese silk fabrics.

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PART 3: Complete the Sentences

Use the textual clues in each passage to complete the sentences.

1. The ancient text describes how "the finest silk comes from worms that are fed tender mulberry leaves picked in the morning dew." From this description, we can infer that quality silk production depended on _____.
2. Han Dynasty records mention that "common citizens who dared wear the forbidden golden yellow silk would face severe punishment"; this indicates that certain silk colors were _____.
3. According to the passage, "sericulture experts vigilantly monitored the temperature and humidity of silkworm nurseries." The word "vigilantly" in this context means _____.
4. The document states: "First, select the highest quality cocoons. Next, immerse them briefly in hot water. Finally, locate the thread end before unwinding." These words help the reader understand the _____.
5. The historian wrote: "While Roman women adored Chinese silk garments, Roman men initially considered the sheer fabric inappropriate—though they later embraced it." The word "while" signals a relationship of _____.

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PART 4: Draw Conclusions

Use the textual clues in each passage to answer the questions.

TEXT 1

"Imperial records list severe punishments for anyone caught smuggling silkworm eggs, cocoons, or mulberry seeds beyond the empire's borders. Guards at border checkpoints were instructed to search all travelers thoroughly."

What can you conclude about Han Dynasty silk production based on these textual clues?

TEXT 2

"Archaeological excavations of Han tombs have revealed silk fragments that still retain their color after two thousand years. Records describe the complex process of creating and fixing dyes using alum mordants and precise heating methods."

What conclusion can you draw about Han silk dyes from these textual clues?

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Textual Clues – Answer Key

PART 1: Identify the Type of Textual Clue

1. because - SIGNAL WORDS
2. —prized throughout the ancient world— - PUNCTUATION
3. the art of raising silkworms for silk production - CONTEXT CLUES
4. First, Next, Finally - TRANSITION WORDS
5. Silk Production Tools - TEXT FEATURES

PART 2: Multiple Choice

1. b) The silk thread was extremely fine; however, it was surprisingly strong. (SIGNAL WORDS)
2. a) The cocoons were immersed in hot water to soften the sericin, the natural glue binding silk fibers. (CONTEXT CLUES)
3. b) Initially, workers sorted the cocoons by color and quality; subsequently, they began the boiling process. (TRANSITION WORDS)

PART 3: Complete the Sentences

1. careful feeding practices or the quality of mulberry leaves
2. restricted to imperial or noble use only
3. carefully or attentively
4. sequence or steps of silk processing
5. contrast or comparison

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Textual Clues – Answer Key

PART 4: Draw Conclusions

1. The Han Dynasty kept silk production methods a state secret and strictly controlled silk technology.
2. Han silk dyes were remarkably colorfast and technologically advanced for their time.
3. Working conditions in the silk industry were difficult and labor-intensive, primarily employing women and children.
4. Silk functioned as a form of currency and was a valuable economic commodity in Han society.
5. Han silk was highly valued internationally and considered a luxury item worth significant expense.