

LISTEN FOR DISCOURSE MARKER



Strategy: Listen for Discourse Markers

Discourse markers are the "signposts" or "traffic signals" of communication. They are small words or phrases that do not change the core meaning of a sentence but are crucial for organizing speech and showing the logical relationship between ideas.

Definition: Words or phrases that manage and organize the structure, flow, and coherence of a spoken text.

Crucial Role in MUET: They alert the listener to a change in topic, a summary, a contrast, or a conclusion, which often directly corresponds to the information needed to answer a question.

Categories of Discourse Markers & Their Function

Learning the function of a DM is more important than memorizing the word itself. The function tells you how the next piece of information relates to the previous one.

Function	What the Speaker is Doing	Common Discourse Markers (Examples)
Addition	Giving more supporting evidence or points.	Furthermore, Moreover, In addition, Also, Besides, What's more
Contrast / Concession	Introducing an opposing or unexpected point.	However, On the other hand, But, Although, Nevertheless, Even though
Cause / Reason	Explaining the motive or background for something.	<i>Because, Since, As, Due to (a preceding statement), For this reason</i>
Effect / Result	Stating the outcome or consequence of a previous point.	Therefore, Consequently, As a result, Thus, Hence, So

Categories of Discourse Markers & Their Function

Function	What the Speaker is Doing	Common Discourse Markers (Examples)
Sequence / Ordering	Listing points in a specific order (e.g., steps, main ideas).	First, Secondly, Next, Then, Finally, To begin with
Clarification / Example	Giving a detailed illustration or rephrasing a difficult point.	For example, For instance, Such as, In other words, That is to say, I mean
Conclusion / Summary	Signalling the end of an argument or a wrap-up of ideas.	<i>In conclusion, To sum up, Overall, Lastly, All in all</i>
Topic Change / Return	Shifting to a new subject or returning from a digression.	Anyway, By the way (to introduce a new point), So, As I was saying



Actionable Listening Tips

1. **Anticipate the Flow:** When you hear a DM, pause your mental summarizing and adjust your focus for the type of information coming next.

- If you hear "However," you know the following statement will negate or limit the previous point.
- If you hear "In addition," you know a second, similar piece of evidence is coming.

2. **Highlight the Relationship:** The marker is often the key to understanding the relationship between two sentences, which is frequently tested in comprehension questions (e.g., "What is the reason for X?").



Actionable Listening Tips

3. Differentiate DMs from Fillers:

- Some words (like well, so, right) can be DMs (signalling a response or topic shift) or just fillers. Focus on their function in the context of the sentence.
- If the word clearly connects two logical thoughts, it's a DM. If it just fills a silence (Um, Uhh), it is an unnecessary detail