

Template Phrases to Introduce THEIR Ideas

Academic writing is a conversation. Expert writers use signal phrases when introducing ideas from other sources. Here are example templates you can use to introduce someone else's ideas. With more practice, it becomes easier to create your own signal phrases depending on a sentence's purpose.

Introducing what "they say"

- A number of sociologists have recently suggested that _____.
- According to X, _____.
- In their recent work, Y and Z have offered harsh critiques of ____ for ____.

Introducing "standard views"

- Americans have always believed that _____.
- Common sense seems to dictate that _____.
- Many people assume that _____.

Introducing something implied or assumed

- One implication of X's treatment of _____ is that _____.
- Although X does not say so directly, she apparently assumes that _____.
- Although none of them have said so, my teachers gave me the impression that _____.

Introducing an ongoing debate

- In discussions of X, one controversial issue has been _____. On one hand, _____ argues _____. On the other hand, _____ contends _____. Others even maintain _____. My own view is _____.
- When it comes to the topic of _____, most of us will readily agree that _____. Where this agreement usually ends, however, is on the question of _____. Whereas some are convinced that _____, others maintain that _____.

Keeping what "they say" in perspective

- In conclusion, as I suggested earlier, defenders of _____ can't have it both ways. Their assertion that _____ is contradicted by their claim that _____.

Signaling who is saying what in your own writing

- According to both X and Y, _____.
- My view, contrary to what X has argued, is that _____.
- Adding to X's argument, I would point out that _____.

Making what "they say" something "you say"

- When I was a child, I used to think that _____.
- Although I should know better by now, I cannot help thinking that _____.
- At the same time that I believe _____, I also believe _____.

Adapted from Graff, G., Birkenstein, C., & Durst, R. (Eds.). (2018). *They say / I say* (4th ed.). W. W. Norton.

Template Phrases to Introduce YOUR Ideas

Academic writing is a conversation. We respond to the research and ideas from other authors. The following templates provide strategies for signaling to readers that you're sharing your thoughts about the topic and why it matters. With more practice, it becomes easier to create your own signal phrases depending on a sentence's purpose.

Agreeing

- I agree that _____ because of my experience with _____.
- X's theory of _____ is useful because it demonstrates the difficult problem of _____.

Introducing objections

- Many _____ would probably object that _____.
- _____, of course, may want to question whether _____.
- Nevertheless, both _____ and _____ will suggest otherwise, arguing _____.

Establishing why your claim matters

- _____ matters/is important because it _____.
- Although X may seem trivial, it is in fact crucial in terms of today's concern over _____.
- Ultimately, what is at stake here is _____.

Disagreeing, with reasons

- X is mistaken because she overlooks _____.
- I disagree with X's view that _____ because, as recent research has shown, _____.
- X's claim that _____ rests upon the questionable assumption that _____.

Entertaining objections

- Yet some readers may challenge my view by insisting that _____.
- Of course, many will disagree on the grounds that _____.

Indicating who cares

- _____ used to think _____. But recently _____ suggest that _____.
- The interpretation challenges the work of those critics who have long assumed that _____.
- If _____ stopped to think about it, many of them might simply assume _____. However, new researcher shows _____.

Agreeing and disagreeing simultaneously

- Although I agree with X to a point, I cannot accept his overriding assumption that _____.
- Whereas X provides ample evidence of _____, Y and Z's research on _____ convinces me that _____ instead.

Making concessions while standing your ground

- Proponents of X are right to argue that _____. However, they exaggerate when they claim _____.
- On one hand, I agree with X that _____. But on the other hand, I still insist _____.

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