

# Useful Templates

Need help getting started on a paper and/or making certain rhetorical moves in your paper? These templates might help!

## **INTRODUCING WHAT "THEY SAY"**

- A number of sociologists have recently suggested that X's work has several fundamental problems.
- It has become common today to dismiss X's contribution to this field of sociology.
- In their recent work, Y and Z have offered harsh critiques of Dr. X for \_\_\_\_\_.

## **INTRODUCING "STANDARD VIEWS"**

- Americans today tend to believe that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Conventional wisdom has it that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Common sense seems to dictate that \_\_\_\_\_.
- The standard way of thinking about topic X has it that \_\_\_\_\_.
- It is often said that \_\_\_\_\_.
- My whole life I have heard it said that \_\_\_\_\_.
- You would think that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Many people assumed that \_\_\_\_\_.

## **MAKING WHAT "THEY SAY" SOMETHING YOU SAY**

- I've always believed that \_\_\_\_\_.
- 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 \_\_\_\_\_.

## **INTRODUCING SOMETHING IMPLIED OR ASSUMED**

- Although none of them have ever said it so directly, my teachers have often given me the impression that \_\_\_\_\_.
- One implication of X's treatment of \_\_\_\_\_ is that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Although X does not say so directly, she apparently assumes that \_\_\_\_\_.
- While they rarely admit as much, \_\_\_\_\_ often take for granted 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 \_\_\_\_\_.
- In conclusion then, as I suggested earlier, defenders of \_\_\_\_\_ can't have it both ways. Their assertion that \_\_\_\_\_ is contradicted by their claim that \_\_\_\_\_.

## **CAPTURING AUTHORIAL ACTION**

- X acknowledges that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X agrees that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X argues that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X believes that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X denies/does not deny that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X complains that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X concedes that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X demonstrates that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X deplores the tendency to \_\_\_\_\_.
- X celebrates the fact that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X emphasizes that \_\_\_\_\_.

**CAPTURING AUTHORIAL ACTION cont.**

- X insists that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X observes that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X questions whether \_\_\_\_\_.
- X refutes the claim that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X reminds us that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X reports that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X suggests that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X urges us to \_\_\_\_\_.

**INTRODUCING QUOTATIONS**

- X states, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- As the prominent philosopher X puts it, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- According to X, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- X himself writes, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- In her book, \_\_\_\_\_, X maintains that "\_\_\_\_\_."
- Writing the journal *Commentary*, X complains that, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- In X's view, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- X agrees when she writes, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- X disagrees when he writes, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- X complicates matters further when he writes, "\_\_\_\_\_."

**EXPLAINING QUOTATIONS**

- Basically, X is saying \_\_\_\_\_.
- In other words, X believes \_\_\_\_\_.
- In making this comment, X argues that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X is insisting that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X's point is that \_\_\_\_\_.
- The essence of X's argument is that \_\_\_\_\_.

**DISAGREEING, WITH REASONS**

- I think X is mistaken because she overlooks \_\_\_\_\_.
- X's claim that \_\_\_\_\_ rests upon the questionable assumption that \_\_\_\_\_.
- I disagree with X's view that \_\_\_\_\_ because, as recent research has shown, \_\_\_\_\_.
- X contradicts herself/can't have it both ways. On the one hand, she argues \_\_\_\_\_. But on the other hand, she also says \_\_\_\_\_.
- By focusing on \_\_\_\_\_, X overlooks the deeper problem of \_\_\_\_\_.
- X claims \_\_\_\_\_, but we don't need him to tell us that. Anyone familiar with \_\_\_\_\_ has long known that \_\_\_\_\_.

**AGREEING—WITH A DIFFERENCE**

- I agree that \_\_\_\_\_ because my experience \_\_\_\_\_ confirms it.
- X is surely right about \_\_\_\_\_ because, as she may not be aware, recent studies have shown that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X's theory of \_\_\_\_\_ is extremely useful because it sheds insight on the difficult problem of \_\_\_\_\_.
- I agree that \_\_\_\_\_, a point that needs emphasizing since so many people believe \_\_\_\_\_.
- Those unfamiliar with this school of thought may be interested to know that it basically boils down to \_\_\_\_\_.
- If group X is right that \_\_\_\_\_, as I think they are, then we need to reassess the popular assumption that \_\_\_\_\_.

**EMBEDDING VOICE MARKERS**

- X overlooks what I consider an important point about \_\_\_\_\_.
- My own view is that what X insists is a \_\_\_\_\_ is in fact a \_\_\_\_\_.
- I wholeheartedly endorse what X calls \_\_\_\_\_.
- These conclusions, which X discusses in \_\_\_\_\_, add weight to the argument that \_\_\_\_\_.

Courtesy the Odegaard Writing & Research Center (<http://www.depts.washington.edu/owrc>)  
 Adapted from Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter In Academic Writing*.  
 New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006.

## **AGREEING AND DISAGREEING SIMULTANEOUSLY**

- Although I agree with X up to a point, I cannot accept his overall conclusion that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Although I disagree with much that X says, I fully endorse his final conclusion that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Though I concede \_\_\_\_\_, I still insist that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Whereas X provides ample evidence that \_\_\_\_\_, Y and Z's research on \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ convinces me that \_\_\_\_\_ instead.
- X is right that \_\_\_\_\_, but she seems on more dubious ground when she claims that \_\_\_\_\_.
- While X is probably wrong when she claims that \_\_\_\_\_, she is right that \_\_\_\_\_.
- I'm of two minds about X's claim that \_\_\_\_\_. On the one hand, I agree that \_\_\_\_\_. On the other hand, I'm not sure if \_\_\_\_\_.
- My feelings on the issue are mixed. I do support X's position that \_\_\_\_\_, but I find Y's argument about \_\_\_\_\_ and Z's research on \_\_\_\_\_ to be equally persuasive.

## **SIGNAL WHO IS SAYING WHAT**

- X argues \_\_\_\_\_.
- According to both X and Y, \_\_\_\_\_.
- Politicians \_\_\_\_\_, X argues, should \_\_\_\_\_.
- Most athletes will tell you that \_\_\_\_\_.
- My own view, however, is that \_\_\_\_\_.
- I agree, as X may not realize, that \_\_\_\_\_.
- But \_\_\_\_\_ are real, and arguably, the most significant factor in \_\_\_\_\_.
- But X is wrong that \_\_\_\_\_.
- However, it is simply not true that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Indeed, it is highly likely that \_\_\_\_\_.
- But the view that \_\_\_\_\_ does not fit all the facts.
- X is right that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X is wrong that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X is both right and wrong that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Yet a sober analysis of the matter reveals \_\_\_\_\_.
- Nevertheless, new research shows \_\_\_\_\_.
- Anyone familiar with \_\_\_\_\_ should see that \_\_\_\_\_.

## **ENTERTAINING OBJECTIONS**

- At this point I would like to raise some objections that have been inspired by the skeptic in me. She feels that I have been ignoring \_\_\_\_\_. "\_\_\_\_\_, " she says to me, "\_\_\_\_\_."
- Yet some readers may challenge the view that \_\_\_\_\_. After all, many believe \_\_\_\_\_. Indeed, my own argument that \_\_\_\_\_ seems to ignore \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Of course, many will probably disagree with this assertion that \_\_\_\_\_.

## **NAMING YOUR NAYSAYERS**

- Here many *feminists* would probably object that \_\_\_\_\_.
- But *social Darwinists* would certainly take issue with the argument that \_\_\_\_\_.
- *Biologists*, of course, may want to dispute my claim that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Nevertheless, both *followers and critics of Malcolm X* will probably argue that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Although not all *Christians* think alike, some of them will probably dispute my claim that \_\_\_\_\_.
- *Non-native English speakers* are so diverse in their views that it's hard to generalize about them, but some are likely to object on the grounds that \_\_\_\_\_.

## **INTRODUCING OBJECTIONS INFORMALLY**

- But is my proposal realistic? What are the chances of its actually being adopted?
- Yet is it always true that \_\_\_\_\_? Is it always the case, as I have been suggesting, that \_\_\_\_\_?
- However, does the evidence I've cited prove conclusively that \_\_\_\_\_?
- "Impossible," you say. "Your evidence must be skewed."

## **MAKING CONCESSIONS WHILE STILL STANDING YOUR GROUND**

- Although I grant that \_\_\_\_\_, I still maintain that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Proponents of X are right to argue that \_\_\_\_\_. But they exaggerate when they claim that \_\_\_\_\_.
- While it is true that \_\_\_\_\_, it does not necessarily follow that \_\_\_\_\_.
- On the one hand, I agree with X that \_\_\_\_\_. But on the other hand, I still insist that \_\_\_\_\_.

## **INDICATING WHO CARES**

- \_\_\_\_\_ used to think \_\_\_\_\_. But recently [or within the past few decades] \_\_\_\_\_ suggests that \_\_\_\_\_.
- What this new research does, then, is correct the mistaken impression, held by many earlier researchers, that \_\_\_\_\_.
- These findings challenge the work of earlier researchers, who tended to assume that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Recent studies like these shed new light on \_\_\_\_\_, which previous studies had not addressed.
- Researchers have long assumed that \_\_\_\_\_. For instance, one eminent scholar of cell biology, \_\_\_\_\_, assumed in \_\_\_\_\_, her seminal work on cell structures and functions that fat cells \_\_\_\_\_. As \_\_\_\_\_ herself put it, "\_\_\_\_\_" (200). Another leading scientist, \_\_\_\_\_, argued that fat cells "\_\_\_\_\_" (200). Ultimately, when it came to the nature of fat, the basic assumption was that \_\_\_\_\_.
- If sports enthusiasts stopped to think about it, many of them might simply assume that the most successful athletes \_\_\_\_\_. However, new research shows \_\_\_\_\_.
- These findings challenge dieter's common assumptions that \_\_\_\_\_.
- At first glance, teenagers appear to \_\_\_\_\_. But on closer inspection \_\_\_\_\_.

## **ESTABLISHING WHY YOUR CLAIM MATTERS**

- X matters/is important because \_\_\_\_\_.
- Although X may seem trivial, it is in fact crucial in terms of today's concern over \_\_\_\_\_.
- Ultimately, what is at stake here is \_\_\_\_\_.
- These findings have important consequences for the broader domain of \_\_\_\_\_.
- My discussion of X is in fact addressing the larger matter of \_\_\_\_\_.
- These conclusions/This discovery will have significant applications in \_\_\_\_\_ as well as in \_\_\_\_\_.
- Although X may seem of concern to only a small group of \_\_\_\_\_, it should in fact concern anyone who cares about \_\_\_\_\_.

## **ADDING METACOMMENTARY**

- In other words,
- What \_\_\_\_\_ really means by this is
- Essentially, I am arguing that
- My point is not that we should \_\_\_\_\_, but that we should \_\_\_\_\_.
- What \_\_\_\_\_ really means is \_\_\_\_\_.
- In other words, \_\_\_\_\_.
- To put it another way, \_\_\_\_\_.
- In sum, then, \_\_\_\_\_.
- My conclusion, then, is that, \_\_\_\_\_.
- In short, \_\_\_\_\_.
- What is more important, \_\_\_\_\_.
- Incidentally, \_\_\_\_\_.
- By the way, \_\_\_\_\_.
- Chapter 2 explores, \_\_\_\_\_, while Chapter 3 examines \_\_\_\_\_.
- Having just argued that \_\_\_\_\_, let us now turn our attention to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Although some readers may object that \_\_\_\_\_, I would answer that \_\_\_\_\_.