

Sentence Templates

Our words are very important, especially when it comes to creating strong, thoughtful papers. Many times, the format is foreign, and assistance is needed to take that next step with sentence structure. These suggestions are here for just that: to suggest. Please note there are hundreds of other ways for writers to say what they want. Also, please make sure the sentence flows after using these. If it does not flow, tweak the sentence until it works.

Introducing what “they” say

- Negative
 - 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 the field of sociology.
 - In their recent work, Y and Z have offered harsh critiques of X for_____.
- Positive
 - In many circles, X has been heralded by the leaders of this industry for his or her ideas on_____.
 - Y and Z offer high praise in their most recent work for X’s thoughts on_____.

Introducing the “standard view”

- 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/thought/believed that_____.
- Many people assumed that_____.

Introducing something implied or assumed

- Although none of them have ever said so directly, teachers often give the impression that_____.
- One implication of X’s treatment of _____ is that_____.
- Although X does not say so directly, she apparently assumes that_____.
- While he rarely admits as much, Y often takes for granted that_____.

Introducing an ongoing debate

- In discussions of X, one controversial issue has been_____. On the one hand,_____ argues _____, while on the other hand,_____ presents that_____. Others even maintain_____.
- When it comes to the topic of_____, most would readily agree that_____. Where this agreement usually ends, however, is on the question of_____. Where some are convinced that_____, others maintain that_____.
- As suggested previously, defenders of_____ cannot have it both ways. Their assertion that_____ is contradicted by their claim that_____.

Introducing quotations

- X states, “_____.”
- As the prominent philosopher X puts it, “_____.”
- According to X, “_____.”
- X himself writes, “_____.”
- In her book, _____, X maintains that “_____.”
- Writing in the journal _____, 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

- X is mistaken because she overlooks _____.
- X’s claim that _____ rests upon the questionable assumption that _____.
- X contradicts herself/cannot have it both ways. On the one hand, she argues _____. However, on the other hand, she also presents _____.
- By focusing on _____, X overlooks the deeper problem of _____.
- X claims _____, but this claim is unnecessary. Anyone familiar with _____ has long known that _____.

Agreeing—with a difference

- 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 _____.
- _____ is a point that needs emphasizing since so many people believe _____.
- Those unfamiliar with this school of thought may be interested to know that, in simplest terms, it is _____.
- If group X is right that _____, then the popular assumption of _____ needs to be reassessed.

Agreeing and disagreeing simultaneously

- Although X’s argument is agreeable to a point, his overall conclusion of _____ is unacceptable.
- While X says many things that can be disproved, his final conclusion of _____ can be supported.
- Though it can be conceded that _____, it must be insisted that _____.

- Whereas X provides ample evidence that _____, Y and Z's research on _____ and _____ points to the conclusion _____ 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 _____, her claim that _____ seems to be sound.

Signal phrases

- X argues _____.
- According to both X and Y, _____.
- Most athletes will say that _____.
- But _____ is real and, arguably, the most significant factor in _____.
- X is wrong in that _____.
- However, it is simply not true that _____.
- Indeed, it is highly likely that _____.
- The view that _____ does not fit all the facts _____.
- X is right/wrong that _____.
- A sober analysis of the matter reveals _____.
- Nevertheless, new research shows _____.
- Anyone familiar with _____ should see that _____.

Embedding voice markers

- X overlooks what is considered an important point about _____.
- These conclusions, which X discusses in _____, add weight to the argument that _____.

Entertaining objections

- Yet, some individuals may challenge the view that _____. After all, many believe _____. A sound argument for _____ must not ignore _____ and _____.
- Of course, many would probably disagree with this assertion on the grounds that _____.

Naming your naysayers

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

Making concessions while still standing your ground

- Proponents of X are right to argue that _____. However, they exaggerate when they claim that _____.
- While it is true that _____, it does not necessarily follow that _____.

Indicating who cares

- _____ used to think _____. Recently/within the past few decades, _____ suggests that _____.
- What this new research does, then, is correct the mistaken impression held by many researchers that _____.
- These findings challenge the work of earlier researchers, who assumed 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, _____, assumes in _____, her seminal work on cell structures and functions, that fat cells _____. As _____, herself, puts it, “_” (citation). Another leading scientist, _____, argues that fat cells “_____” (citation). Ultimately, in previous years, when it came down to the nature of fat, the basic assumption was that _____. Recently, a new body of research shows that fat cells are far more complex and 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 dieters’ common assumptions that _____.
- At first glance, teenagers appear to _____. On closer inspection, they _____.

Establishing why your claims matter

- 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 scope of _____.
- The discussion of X is, in fact, addressing the larger issue of _____.
- Although X may seem to be a concern to only a small group of _____, it should concern anyone who cares about _____.

Adding meta-commentary

- In other words, _____.
- What _____ really means by this is _____.
- To put it another way, _____.
- In short, _____.
- For example, _____.
- This is not to say _____, but rather _____.
- Incidentally, _____.

Source:

Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. *“They Say, I Say”*: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing. W.W. Norton, 2014.