

They Say/I Say Templates

Introducing Something Implied or Assumed

- Although X does not say so directly, she/he apparently assumes that _____.
- While they rarely admit as much, _____ often take for granted that _____.

Introducing An Outgoing Debate

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

Disagreeing, with Reasons

- I think that X is mistaken because he/she overlooks _____.
- X's claim that _____ rests upon the questionable assumption that _____.
- I disagree with X's view that _____ because, as recent research (personal experience) has shown, _____.
- By focusing on _____, X overlooks the deeper problem of _____.
- X claims _____, but we don't need him/her to tell us that. Anyone familiar with _____ has long known that _____.

Agreeing—with a Difference

- X is right about _____ because, as he/she may not be aware, recent studies have shown that _____.
- X's theory of _____ is useful because it sheds insight on the difficult problem of _____.
- I agree that _____, a point that needs emphasizing since so many people believe _____.

Agreeing and Disagreeing Simultaneously

- Although I agree with X to a point, I cannot accept his/her overall conclusion that _____ because _____.
- Although I disagree with much of what X says, I fully endorse his/her final conclusion that _____.
- Though I concede that _____, I still insist that _____.
- X is right that _____, but she seems to be on more dubious ground when she/he states _____.

taken from: Graff, G, & Birkenstein, C. (2010). *They say/I say: The moves that matter in academic writing*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.