

# SENTENCE FRAMES

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## THEY SAY: SUMMARIZING THE CONVERSATION SO FAR

### **TEMPLATES 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 assume that \_\_\_\_\_.

### **TEMPLATES FOR MAKING WHAT “THEY SAY” SOMETHING THAT YOU SAY**

*introduce the views you are responding to by presenting them as your own:*

- 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 \_\_\_\_\_.

### **TEMPLATES FOR SUMMARIZING A POINT THAT IS IMPLIED OR ASSUMED**

- Although none of them have ever said 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 \_\_\_\_\_.

### **TEMPLATES FOR INTRODUCING AN ONGOING DEBATE**

- In discussions of X, one controversial issue has been \_\_\_\_\_. On the 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 \_\_\_\_\_.

### **TEMPLATES FOR KEEPING WHAT “THEY SAY” IN VIEW AFTER SUMMARIZING**

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

### **TEMPLATES FOR INTRODUCING SUMMARIES AND QUOTATIONS**

- She demonstrates that \_\_\_\_\_.
- In fact, they celebrate the fact that \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_, he admits

### **VERBS FOR INTRODUCING SUMMARIES AND QUOTATIONS VERBS FOR MAKING A CLAIM**

argue            insist            assert            observe            believe            remind us            claim  
report            emphasize            suggest

### **VERBS FOR EXPRESSING AGREEMENT**

acknowledge            endorse            admire            extol            agree            praise  
concur            reaffirm            corroborate            support            do not deny            verify

### **VERBS FOR QUESTIONING OR DISAGREEING**

complain            disavow            complicate            question            contend  
refute            contradict            reject            deny            renounce  
deplore the tendency to repudiate

### **VERBS FOR MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

advocate            implore            call for            plead            demand  
recommend            encourage            urge            exhort            warn

### **TEMPLATES FOR 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 Commentary, X complains that “\_\_\_\_\_.”
- In X's view, “\_\_\_\_\_.”
- X agrees when she writes, “\_\_\_\_\_.”
- X disagrees when he writes, “\_\_\_\_\_.”
- X complicates matters further when she writes, “\_\_\_\_\_.”

### **TEMPLATES FOR 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\_\_\_\_\_.

## I SAY: RESPONDING TO THE CONVERSATION WITH YOUR OWN IDEAS

### **TEMPLATES FOR 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\_\_\_\_\_.

### **TEMPLATES FOR AGREEING**

- 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\_\_\_\_\_.
- I agree that\_\_\_\_\_, a point that needs emphasizing since so many people believe\_\_\_\_\_.
- If group X is right that\_\_\_\_\_, as I think they are, then we need to reassess the popular assumption that\_\_\_\_\_.

### **TEMPLATES FOR AGREEING AND DISAGREEING SIMULTANEOUSLY**

- Although I agree with X up to a point, I cannot accept his overall conclusion that\_\_\_\_\_.
- Conversely, if you want to stress your agreement more than your disagreement, you would use a template like this one.
- Although I disagree with much that X says, I fully endorse his final conclusion that\_\_\_\_\_. The first template above might be called a "yes, but..." move, the second a "no, but..." move. Other versions include the following.

- Though I concede that \_\_\_\_\_, I still insist that \_\_\_\_\_.
- 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 \_\_\_\_\_.
- Whereas X provides ample evidence that \_\_\_\_\_, Y and Z's research on \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ convinces me that \_\_\_\_\_ instead.
- 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.

## THEY SAY: COUNTERARGUMENT

### **TEMPLATES FOR 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 my view that \_\_\_\_\_. After all, many believe that \_\_\_\_\_. Indeed, my own argument that \_\_\_\_\_ seems to ignore \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Of course, many will probably disagree with this assertion that \_\_\_\_\_.
- 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 suggest otherwise and 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 \_\_\_\_\_.

### **TEMPLATES FOR INTRODUCING OBJECTIONS INFORMALLY**

*Objections can also be introduced in ways that are a bit more informal. For instance, you can frame objections in the form of questions.*

- 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\_\_\_\_\_?
- You can also let your naysayer speak directly. "Impossible," you say. "Your evidence must be skewed."

## I SAY: REBUTTAL

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

- Although I grant that\_\_\_\_\_, I still maintain that\_\_\_\_\_.
- Proponents of X are right to object 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 the liberal view that\_\_\_\_\_. But on the other hand, I still insist that\_\_\_\_\_.

### **TO HELP YOU ANTICIPATE AND RESPOND TO AN OBJECTION** *This move helps you imagine and respond to other viewpoints.*

- Although some readers may object that\_\_\_\_\_, I would answer that\_\_\_\_\_.

## I SAY: SO WHAT? WHO CARES?

### **TEMPLATES FOR INDICATING WHO CARES**

- \_\_\_\_\_used to think\_\_\_\_\_. But recently [or within the past few decades] suggests that\_\_\_\_\_.
- This interpretation challenges the work of those critics who have long assumed 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.

- But who really cares? Who besides me and a handful of recent researchers has a stake in these claims? At the very least, the researchers who assumed that fat\_\_\_\_\_should care.

*To gain greater authority as a writer, it helps to name specific people or groups who have a stake in your claims and to go into some detail about their views.*

- 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.
- But a new body of research shows that fat cells are far more complex and that\_\_\_\_\_.

*In other cases, you might refer to certain people or groups who should care about your claims.*

- 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 the common assumption among corporate leaders that\_\_\_\_\_.
- At first glance, teenagers might say\_\_\_\_\_. But on closer inspection\_\_\_\_\_.

### **TEMPLATES FOR 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 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\_\_\_\_\_.

*Finally, you can also treat the “so what?” question as a related aspect of the “who cares?” question.*

- Although X may seem of concern to only a small group of\_\_\_\_\_, it should in fact concern anyone who cares about\_\_\_\_\_.

### **TO ANSWER THE “SO WHAT?” AND “WHO CARES?” QUESTIONS** *This move helps you identify who cares, or should care, about your argument and why.*

- This point should be of interest to anyone who\_\_\_\_\_.
- In making this point, I am challenging the commonly held belief that\_\_\_\_\_.

# CLARITY & COHERENCE

## TRANSITIONS

- **ADDITION** also, and, besides, furthermore, in addition, indeed, in fact, moreover, so too
- **EXAMPLE** after all, as an illustration, for example, for instance, specifically, to take a case in point
- **ELABORATION** actually, by extension, that is, in other words, to put it another way
- **COMPARISON** along the same lines, in the same way, likewise, similarly
- **CONTRAST** although, but, by contrast, conversely, despite the fact that, even though, however, in contrast, nevertheless, nonetheless, on the contrary, on the other hand, regardless, whereas, while, yet
- **CAUSE AND EFFECT** accordingly, as a result, because, consequently, hence, in effect, since, so, then, therefore, thus
- **CONCESSION** admittedly, although it is true, granted, naturally, of course, to be sure
- **CONCLUSION** as a result, consequently, hence, in conclusion, in short, in sum, therefore, thus, to sum up, to summarize, ultimately, to put it bluntly

## METACOMMENTARY

- In other words, \_\_\_\_\_.
- What \_\_\_\_\_ really means is \_\_\_\_\_.
- This is not to say \_\_\_\_\_.

**TO WARD OFF POTENTIAL MISUNDERSTANDINGS** *This move differentiates your view from ones it might be mistaken for.*

- But don't misunderstand me. My point is not \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_.
- I concede, of course, that \_\_\_\_\_. Nevertheless, \_\_\_\_\_.

**TO ALERT READERS TO AN ELABORATION OF A PREVIOUS IDEA** *This move says to readers: "In case you didn't get it the first time, I'll try saying the same thing in a different way."*

- In other words, \_\_\_\_\_.
- To put it another way, \_\_\_\_\_.

**TO PROVIDE READERS WITH A ROADMAP TO YOUR TEXT** *This move orients readers, giving them advance notice about where you are going and making it easier for them to process and follow your text.*

- Chapter 2 explores \_\_\_\_\_, while Chapter 3 examines \_\_\_\_\_.
- Having just argued that \_\_\_\_\_, let us now turn our attention to \_\_\_\_\_.

**TO MOVE FROM A GENERAL CLAIM TO A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE** *This move signals that you are about to offer a concrete example that illustrates what you're saying.*

- For example, \_\_\_\_\_.
- for instance, demonstrates \_\_\_\_\_.
- Consider \_\_\_\_\_, for example.
- To take a case in point, \_\_\_\_\_.

### **TO INDICATE THAT A CLAIM IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT, OR LESS IMPORTANT**

*This move shows that what you are about to say is either more or less important than what you just said.*

- Even more important, \_\_\_\_\_.
- But above all, \_\_\_\_\_.
- Incidentally, \_\_\_\_\_.
- By the way, \_\_\_\_\_.

### **TO GUIDE READERS TO YOUR MOST GENERAL POINT** *This move shows that you are wrapping things up and tying up various subpoints previously made.*

- In sum, then, \_\_\_\_\_.
- My conclusion, then, is that \_\_\_\_\_.
- In short, \_\_\_\_\_.

### **TEMPLATES FOR SIGNALING WHO IS SAYING WHAT IN YOUR OWN WRITING**

- 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 \_\_\_\_\_.
- X is right that \_\_\_\_\_.
- The evidence shows that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X's assertion that \_\_\_\_\_ does not fit the facts.
- Anyone familiar with \_\_\_\_\_ should agree that \_\_\_\_\_.
- But \_\_\_\_\_ are real, and are arguably the most significant factor in \_\_\_\_\_.

### **TEMPLATES FOR 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 \_\_\_\_\_.