

Sentence Starters

from *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*

1 Introducing What "They Say"

- A number of _____ have recently suggested that _____.
- It has become common today to dismiss _____.
- In their recent work, Y and Z have offered harsh critiques of _____ for _____.
- According to _____'s study/article, _____.

2

Introducing What "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 _____.
- It is often thought that _____.
- Many people assume that _____.
- Most claim that _____.

3

Introducing Something Implied or Assumed

- Although none of them have ever said so directly, teachers often give students the impression that _____.
- One implication of X's thoughts on _____ is that _____.
- Although X does not say so directly, she apparently assumes that _____.
- While they rarely admit as much, _____ often take for granted that _____.

4

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 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 suggested earlier, defenders of _____ cannot have it both ways. Their assertion that _____ is contradicted by their claim that _____.

5

Capturing Authorial

Action

- X acknowledges that _____.
- X agrees that _____.
- X argues that _____.
- X believes that _____.
- X denies/does not deny that _____.
- X claims that _____.
- X complains that _____.
- X demonstrates that _____.
- X employs _____.
- X celebrates the fact that _____.
- X emphasizes that _____.
- X insists that _____.
- X questions whether _____.
- X reports that _____.
- X suggests that _____.
- X urges readers to _____.
- Specifically, X explains _____.
- X counters, arguing that _____.

7

Quote Integration #1

- In _____, X states _____: " _____ " (#).
- In *A Ram's Life*, Costanza states that the best way to destroy a society is through education deprivation: "[a] civilization, a people, a society is easily destroyed in a generation or two if the tools of thought are removed. Critical thinking, reading, inquiry, exploration, curiosity—these are essential to human flourishing" (4).
- In *Simon Says: Studying Learned Behaviors*, Kramer states that children learn best from other children: "[t]he most effective teachers are also students; children look to their peers to measure and regulate their behaviors" (65).

6

Writing for Science

- To test the hypothesis that _____, X measured _____ and found that _____. Therefore, X concluded _____.
- Experiments showing _____ and _____ have led scientists to propose _____.
- The data suggests/hint/imply _____.
- The results show/demonstrate _____.
- X's findings call into question the widely accepted theory that _____.
- X's work leads to the question of _____. Therefore, we investigated _____.
- One explanation for X's findings of _____ is that _____. An alternative explanation is _____.
- The difference between _____ and _____ is probably due to _____.
- The work of Y and Z shows that _____.

9

Quote Integration #3

- X argues that " _____ " (#).
- Newman argues that "the United States Postal Service is an integral service in American life—that this country is carried on the backs of mailmen" (9).
- Wattley argues that "tooth decay leads to poor heart health; therefore, dental hygiene is important for the whole body" (17).

8

Quote Integration #2

- X suggests that _____ when he/she says, " _____ " (#).
- Benz suggests that science fiction allows readers to think about alternate ways of living when she says, "[t]his sort of story allows readers to explore life's possibilities" (7).
- Seinfeld suggests that comedy is a complex process that requires critical thinking when he says, "[w]ithout the ability to track the situations of a spoken story, and piece all the details together, an audience member may never 'get' the punchline. There's a lot of balls to keep up in the air when 'reading' a comedian's joke" (99).

10

Discussing the Central Idea

The central idea of " _____ " by X is _____. In the article, X explains _____. For example, _____. Then X describes _____. She claims that _____. Therefore, the article's central idea is _____ because _____.

11

Explaining Quotations

- Essentially, X is saying _____.
- In other words, X believes _____.
- In making this comment, X argues _____.
- X's point is that _____.
- The essence of X's argument is that _____.
- This shows that _____.

13

Explaining Quotations, part 2

- X is right that _____.
- Clearly, the evidence demonstrates that _____.
- Anyone familiar with this claim that _____ should agree that _____.
- In this, X argues that _____.

15

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 that _____, I still insist that _____.
- X is right that _____, but does not seem to have must support for the claim that _____.
- While X is probably wrong when she claims that _____, she is right that _____.

17

Answering the "So what?" Question

- X 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 _____.
- If it is true that _____, then major consequences follow for _____.
- This conclusion 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 _____.
- This point that _____ should interest those who _____. Beyond this limited audience, however, this point should speak to anyone who cares about the larger issue of _____ because _____.

12

Disagreeing, with Reasons

- I think X is mistaken because she overlooks _____.
- X's claim that _____ rests upon the assumption that _____.
- I disagree with X's view that _____ because _____.
- X contradicts herself. On the one hand, she argues _____. On the other hand, she also says _____. Both cannot coexist; therefore, _____.
- By focusing on _____, X overlooks the deeper problem of _____.

14

Introducing Objections/Counterarguments

- One might object that _____; however, _____.
- It may seem that _____, but _____.
- It is true that _____; however, _____.
- Admittedly, _____ is true, but _____.
- But is this idea realistic? Some may argue that _____; however, _____.
- However, does the evidence cited prove conclusively that _____? Some claim that _____; yet, _____.
- Yet some readers may challenge the view that _____.
- Of course, many will probably disagree with the assertion that _____.

16

Elaboration and Clarification

- In other words, the argument is _____.
- My point is this: _____.
- My point, though, is not _____, but _____.
- This idea is important because _____.
- This shows that _____.
- Considering that _____, it should be clear that _____.
- This suggests that _____.
- This implies that _____.
- A careful reading of this reveals _____.
- The work of Y and Z appears to show that _____, but their reasoning just does not hold up. In fact, their explanation that _____ does not support their claim that _____ because _____.
- While Y and Z claim that _____, their reasoning/evidence actually shows that _____.

18

Analyzing Language

- X's precise diction seems to _____ when he/she uses the words " _____," " _____," and " _____." These imply _____.
- X's use of the word/phrase " _____" develops the theme by drawing attention to _____.
- X's purposeful use of _____ develops the theme _____.