

Signal phrases are used to introduce paraphrased, summarized, or quoted material and attribute it to the original source. Signal phrases provide a transition between your ideas and the sources you are using for support and evidence. They “signal” that you are about to use language or state an idea that is not your own.

Some signal phrases are in the form of a simple introductory phrase. Others include a signal verb that describes how the source is being used. Below are some examples of signal phrases and verbs. In your writing, try to vary these examples and come up with some of your own.

**Sample Signal Phrases**

According to X, “\_\_\_\_.”

Recent studies show that \_\_\_\_.

In her book, \_\_\_\_, X maintains that “\_\_\_\_.”

Writing in the journal XxYyZz, X complains that \_\_\_\_.

In X’s opinion, “\_\_\_\_.”

X acknowledges that \_\_\_\_ .

X reports that \_\_\_\_ .

In the words of X, “\_\_\_\_.”

As X has noted, “\_\_\_\_.”

X offers a persuasive argument: “\_\_\_\_.”

X agrees/disagrees when he writes, “\_\_\_\_.”

X states “\_\_\_\_.”

X concedes, “\_\_\_\_.”

X believes that \_\_\_\_ .

**Sample Signal Verbs Used in Signal Phrases**

acknowledge	cite	deny	insist	report
add	claim	discuss	note	respond
admit	comment	dispute	observe	suggest
agree	compare	emphasize	point out	think
argue	confirm	endorse	reason	write
assert	contend	illustrate	refute	
believe	declare	imply	reject	

**In MLA style**

Use **present tense verbs** to introduce source material unless the time of writing is specified.

**Examples**

Jones suggests that . . .      Jones contends, “. . .”      In 2012, Jones suggested that . . .

**In APA style**

• Use **past tense** or **present perfect tense verbs** to introduce source material.

**Examples**

Jones (2012) suggested that . . .      Jones (2012) has suggested that . . .

• Use **present tense verbs** to discuss the results of an experiment or knowledge that has clearly been established.

**Examples**

The results demonstrate . . .      Researchers agree . . .