

70 useful sentences for academic writing

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This list is organized around keywords (rather than functions / discourse categories) so I can explore each word's ecosystem better, highlight common collocations and so on.

Before you start:

1. Pay close attention to the words **in bold**, which are often used in conjunction with the main word.
2. [] means "insert a suitable word here", while () means "this word is optional."
3. Bear in mind that, within each group, some examples are slightly more formal / less frequent than others.
4. I am not claiming, by any stretch of the imagination, that these are the most common ways to use each word. These are just examples of academic discourse that I collected randomly in the late 90s.

Argue

- a. **Along similar lines**, [X] **argues** that ____.
- b. There seems to be no **compelling reason to argue** that ____.
- c. As a rebuttal to this point, it might be **(convincingly) argued** that ____.
- d. There are [three] main **arguments** that can be **advanced** to support ____.
- e. The **underlying argument** in favor of / against [X] is that ____.
- f. [X]'s **argument** in favor of / against [Y] **runs** as follows: ____.

Claim

- a. In this [paper], I **put forward** the **claim** that ____.
- b. [X] **develops** the **claim** that ____.
- c. There is **ample / growing support** for the **claim** that ____.
- d. [X]'s findings **lend support to** the **claim** that ____.
- e. Taking a middle-ground position, [X] **claims** that ____.

Data

- a. The **data gathered** in the [pilot study] suggests / suggest that ____.
- b. The **data appears / appear to suggest** that ____.
- c. The **data yielded** by this [study] provides strong / convincing evidence that ____.(yielded = generated)
- d. A **closer look at the data** indicates that ____.
- e. The **data generated** by [X] is / are **reported** in [table 1].
- f. The aim of this [section] is to **generalize beyond the data** and ____.

(In modern usage, *data* can also be treated as a mass / uncountable noun, like information. Before you submit your work, check whether the institution you're writing for / on behalf of prefers *data* + plural verb.)

Debate

- [X] has **fostered debate on** _____. (fostered = encouraged)
- There has been **an inconclusive debate about whether** _____.
- The question of whether _____ has **caused much debate** in [our profession] [over the years].
- (Much of) **the current debate revolves around** _____.

Discussion

- In this section / chapter, the **discussion will point to** _____.
- The **foregoing discussion** implies that _____. (foregoing = that came before)
- For the sake of discussion**, I would like to argue that _____.
- In this study, the **question under discussion** is _____.
- In this paper, the **discussion centers on** _____.
- [X] **lies at the heart of the discussion on** _____.

Evidence (Remember: *Evidence* is uncountable.)

- The **available evidence** seems to suggest that _____ / point to _____.
- On the basis of the evidence** currently available, it seems fair to suggest that _____.
- There is **overwhelming evidence** corroborating the notion that _____. (corroborating = confirming)
- Further evidence** supporting / against [X] may lie in the findings of [Y], who _____.
- These results **provide confirmatory evidence** that _____.

Ground

- I will now summarize the **ground covered** in this [chapter] by _____.
- On logical grounds**, there is no compelling reason to argue that _____.
- [X] **takes a middle-ground position** on [Y] and argues that _____.
- On these grounds**, we can argue that _____.
- [X]'s views are **grounded on the assumption** that _____.

Issue

- This study is an attempt to **address the issue of** _____.
- In the present study, **the issue under scrutiny** is _____.
- The **issue of whether** _____ is **clouded** by the fact that _____. (clouded = made less clear)
- To **portray the issue** in [X]'s terms, _____.
- Given the **centrality of this issue to** [my claim], I will now _____.
- This [chapter] is **concerned with the issue of** [how/whether/what] _____.

Literature

- [X] is **prominent in the literature on** [Y].
- There is a **rapidly growing literature on** [X], which indicates that _____.
- The **literature shows no consensus on** [X], which means that _____.
- The (current) **literature on [X] abounds with examples of** _____.

Premise

- The main **theoretical premise behind** [X] is that _____.
- [X] and [Y] **share an important premise:** _____.
- [X] is **premised on the assumption** that _____.
- The **basic premises of** [X]'s theory / argument are _____.
- The **arguments against** [X]'s **premise** rest on [four] assumptions: _____.

Research

- a. This study **draws on research** conducted by ____.
- b. Although there has been relatively little **research on / into** [X], ____.
- c. In the last [X] years, [educational] **research** has **provided ample support for** the assertion that ____.
- d. **Current research** appears / seems to **validate the view** that ____.
- e. **Research on / into** ____ does not **support the view** that ____.
- f. **Further research in this area** may include ____ and ____.
- g. Evidence for [X] is **borne out by research** that shows ____.
- h. There is **insufficient research on / into** ____ to draw any firm conclusions about / on ____.

View

- a. The **consensus view** seems to be that ____.
- b. [X] **propounds the view** that _____. (propound = put forward for consideration)
- c. Current research (does not) appear(s) to **validate** such a **view**.
- d. There have been **dissenters to the view** that _____. (dissenter = someone who disagrees)
- e. The answer to [X] / The difference between [X] and [Y] is not as clear-cut as **popular views** might suggest.
- f. The **view** that _____ is (very much) **in line with** [common sense].
- g. I am **not alone in my view** that ____.
- h. [X] **puts forward the view** that ____.
- i. [X]'s **views rest on the assumption** that ____.