

Agreeing, Disagreeing, and Agreeing with a Difference

When arguing a claim, you'll need to be able to back up your argument with evidence, refute counter-arguments, and qualify (or complicate) your stance. This means you need to engage with research that affirms your argument, undermines your argument, and perhaps does a little bit of both. Below are some templates from the book *They Say/I Say* that you can use to help you construct your arguments.

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____.

X's theory of_____is extremely useful because it sheds insight on the difficult problem of____.

I agree that_____, a point that needs emphasizing since so many people believe_____.

Those unfamiliar with this school of thought may be interested to know that it basically boils down to_____.

If group X is right that_____, as I think they are, then we need to reassess the popular assumption that_____.

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 and Disagreeing Simultaneously (Qualifying)

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 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 am 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.

Conclusion

There are many times you'll need to agree or disagree with another source's argument in your essay and many reasons to qualify those agreements and disagreements. While you get the hang of this kind of writing, the templates on this worksheet can help you discuss complex ideas and their relationships to one another!

References Consulted

1. Birkenstein, Cathy, and Gerald Graff. *They Say / I Say*. 4th ed., WW Norton, 2018.