

Signal Phrases

(Used to introduce source material)

Signal phrases are used to introduce source material.

Signal phrases can be used to introduce direct quotations (exact words), paraphrases, or summaries.

Most common signal phrase is *According to Author, . . .*

To avoid overusing *According to author...*, use a variety of signal phrase verbs that match your word choice and purpose of writing. Any of the verbs listed below can be used as signal verbs to introduce source material. Simply replace the verb with the one that best fits the point you are trying to make.

For example: Author **argues**... Author **reports**... As Author **states**...

Common Signal Phrase Verbs (MLA)

Adds	Declares	Indicates	Recommends	Speculates
Admits	Defines	Informs	Reflects	States
Agrees	Describes	Insists*	Refutes*	Submits
Argues*	Discusses	Maintains	Reiterates	Suggests
Believes	Disputes*	Notes	Rejects*	Writes
Claims	Emphasizes	Observes	Remarks	
Comments	Explains	Offers	Reports	
Confirms	Expresses	Points out	Responds	
Contends	Focuses on	Proposes	Says	
Contradicts*	Highlights	Reasons	Specifies	

*Verb shows opposition and/or strong viewpoint

Note: MLA signal phrase verbs are **present tense**. APA uses similar signal phrase verbs but in **past tense**. (e.g., added, claimed, declared, etc.)