

Research Paper Strategies

- Start by presenting and summarizing your sources
 - Badke: describe then analyze (p. 167)
 - Summaries: [Columbia University guide](#)
 - Paraphrasing: [library handout](#), [Purdue OWL](#)
- Avoid excessive quotation
 - I need to hear your voice and thoughts!
 - 2 short sentences of 35 words max per quote

More Research Paper Strategies

- Finally, analyze your sources in light of your research question
 - And arrive at conclusions
 - Was your research question answered?
 - Do you have any recommendations?
 - Conclusions do not need to be long!

General Writing Advice

- Omit needless words
- Spellcheck (F7 key on a PC), proofread; watch your CAPS, commas, semicolons
- Purdue [OWL](#) for almost any writing question
- *“it is,” “that is,” “they are” NOT it’s, that’s, they’re*
- Avoid “Basically,” “and so on.” “etc.”
- Do not use first or second person: *I, you, we*

Writing Strategies

Establish why your claims are important

X matters/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 _____.

These findings have important consequences for the broader domain of _____.

These conclusions 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 _____.

More Writing Strategies

Introduce quotations

X states, “_____.”

According to X, “_____.”

In her book, _____, X maintains that “_____.”

Writing the journal *Commentary*, X complains that, “_____.”

In X’s view, “_____.”

X complicates matters further when he writes, “_____.”

Explain quotations

In other words, X believes _____.

In making this comment, X argues that _____.

X’s point is that _____.

The essence of X’s argument is that _____.

Even more writing strategies

Disagree with your sources and offer reasons

By focusing on _____, X overlooks the deeper problem of _____.

X's claim that _____ rests upon the questionable assumption that _____.

By focusing on _____, X overlooks the deeper problem of _____.

Proponents of X are right to argue that _____. But they exaggerate when they claim that _____.

While it is true that _____, it does not necessarily follow that _____.

Agree with sources and offer your own analysis

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 _____.

Adapted from Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter In Academic Writing. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006.

Grimmelmann, The Google Dilemma

- Googlebomb & miserable failure
- Talentless hack
- When legitimate searches yield inflammatory results
- Grimmelmann: “search results matter: to culture, to business, to society.”
 - Do you agree? Disagree? Why?

Fister, *The Devil in the Details*

Evaluating sources is a complex and yet very important aspect of how we interact with the multiple streams of conflicting claims that come to us across a diverse set of media channels. Most undergraduates have some familiarity with most media (with the exception of scholarly communication channels), but few are aware of the various dynamics that go into choosing which stories to tell and how claims will be editorially validated. Simply knowing about those processes, however, won't address the need to sort through the many claims and divergent points of view that will be found within any one medium. [[42](#)]

Fister, *The Devil in the Details*

The best solution, possibly the only solution, is to give students many opportunities to develop their own ability to evaluate sources directly through practice. They must have occasion to select, using their own judgment, a wide variety of sources from different media, sort through the differences, develop the rhetorical sophistication to examine evidence used to support claims, and in some form (whether through presentations, papers, or discussion) process what they've found into knowledge of their own. [[45](#)]

Fister, *The Devil in the Details*

Most college students conducting research will struggle to master forms of discourse they will never attempt again beyond their college years. But they will be faced with conundrums in future that will require that they evaluate a variety of perspectives and ultimately come to their own conclusions. Claims based on society-wide anxiety are frequently used to justify any number of political, social, and economic actions. When these anxieties reach fever pitch, the ability to evaluate claims is an important analgesic that, apart from equipping individual students to think independently, has wider implications for the role they might play in future as contributors to responsible social discourse. [[48](#)]

Evaluation game!

- Criteria used to evaluate:
- Reliability
- Accuracy (is information correct?)
- Relevance

Working in groups, find 2 sources that answer this question:

What are universities doing to control the cost of required textbooks?

- One point for each criteria met

For Thursday, April 18

Discussion: Writing an academic research paper

Reading: Badke Ch. 10 and Appendix 1 pp. 196-203 in 3rd ed.; 235-238 in 4th ed

One research journal blog post; prompt follows

Your research paper draft is due
on Thursday, April 25!

Blog Homework: Research Journal Post

- Last week we read about and worked on:
 1. advanced internet searching
 2. searching library catalogs
 3. searching article databases.
- What have you learned in these classes that's new to you?
- How do you see yourself using your new skills outside of our course?