Signal Phrases for Summarizing, Paraphrasing, & Quotations

Based on templates: *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*
by Gerald Graff, Cathy Birkenstein

1. Capturing Authorial Action/ For Summaries or Paraphrasing:
These target phrases alert the reader that the author is about to summarize or paraphrase another idea established by an authority on a chosen topic.

X acknowledges that _____________.
X agrees that _____________.
X argues that _____________.
X believes that _____________.
X denies/ does not deny that _____________.
X claims that _____________.
X complains that _____________.
X concedes that _____________.
X demonstrates that _____________.
X celebrates the fact that _____________.
X emphasizes that _____________.
X insists that _____________.
X observes that _____________.
X questions whether _____________.
X refuses to claim that _____________.
X reminds us that _____________.
X reports that _____________.
X suggests that _____________.
X urges us to _____________.
2. Introducing Quotations:
These target phrases alert the reader that the author is about to quote directly from another source. The writer is preparing the reader for the proper parenthetical citation.

X states, “_____________.”
In her book, ____________, X maintains that “_____________.”
Writing in the journal XxYyZz, X complains that “_____________.”
As the prominent philosopher X puts it, “_____________.”
According to X, “_____________.”
X himself writes, “_____________.”
In X’s view, “_____________.”
X agrees when she writes, “_____________.”
X disagrees when he writes, “_____________.”
X complicates matters further when he writes, “_____________.”

3. Explaining Quotations:
Every paragraph must show clarification, interpretation, or necessary analysis of a supplied quotation or paraphrase. This offers the research author to have the final word in a paragraph.

Basically, X is saying _________________.
In other words, X believes _________________.
In making this comment, X argues that _________________.
X’s view confirms/reaffirms/clarifies the view that _________________.
X is insisting that _________________.
X’s point is that _________________.
The essence of X’s argument is that _________________.
4. Introducing Statistics or “Standard Views”:
The following target phrases alert the reader that the research writer is about to use numerical data or popular opinions. (Remember, numerical data is cited, conventional ideas are not.)

Americans today tend to believe that ________________.
Conventional wisdom has it that ________________.
Common sense seems to dictate that ________________.
The standard way of thinking about topic X has it that ________________.
It is often said that ________________.
Many people assumed that ________________.

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A recent study shows ________________.
Scientists recently noted that ________________.
Doctors at the XxYyZz Institute claim that ________________.
In the 2010 census it was shown that ________________.

5. Introducing Contrasting Arguments:
Frequently research writers find conflicting reports. Inclusion of these debates can add strength to their own works. Analysis of other opinions likewise needs target phrases. When using multiple viewpoints, it is crucial that the reader understands the different opinions.

A number of sociologists have recently suggested that X’s work has several fundamental problems.
It has become common today to dismiss X’s contribution to the field of sociology.
In their recent work, Y and Z have offered harsh critiques of Dr. X for ____________.
X argues ______________.
According to both X and Y, ________________.
Politicians ________________, X argues, should ________________.

6. Expressing Authorial Opinions:
The individual research writer may have opinions regarding the collected information shown in the report. Since personal voice is not allowed, the following target phrases tell the reader the commentary expressed is the research author and not a secondary source. Likewise, these statements help conclude the paragraph and allow the research writer to have the last word on the chose topic.

But ______________ are real and, arguably, the most significant factor in ______.
But X is wrong that ______________.
However, it is simply not true that ______________.
Indeed, it is highly likely that ______________.
But the view that ______________ does not fit all the facts.
X is right that ______________.
X is wrong that ______________.
X is both right and wrong that ______________.
Yet a sober analysis of the matter reveals ______________.
Nevertheless, new research shows ______________.
Anyone familiar with ______________ should see that ______________.
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 ______________.