

# Strong Verbs



When describing the ideas of a source you're using in your writing, avoid using weak verbs such as "said," "show," "demonstrate," and "state." Practice using a variety of precise verbs that give a clearer picture of your understanding of an author's purpose, style, and message.

Additional weak verbs to avoid include "to be" verbs: is/are, was/were, be/being/been.

Agreement Words	Disagreement Words	Neutral Words	Causality Words	Question Words
acknowledge	accuse	address	cause	ascertain
add	attack	balance	entail	beg
affirm	blame	characterize	evoke	demand
agree	complain	compare	evolve	inquire
allude	complicate	declare	incite	plead
amplify	condemn	define	infer	question
clarify	confuse	discover	justify	speculate
complement	contend	display	render	suggest
concede	contradict	effect	reward	
connect	criticize	emphasize		
correlate	defend	epitomize	<b>Making Recommendations</b>	
corroborate	defy	establish	advocate	
endorse	deny	evaluate	encourage	
enforce	deride	exemplify	exhort	
enhance	detract	formulate	implore	
laud	diminish	illustrate	propose	
legitimize	disagree	imply	recommend	
link	discourage	indicate	urge	
magnify	dismiss	interpret	warn	
maximize	insult	juxtapose		
praise	invalidate	observe		
promote	lament	point out		
reaffirm	minimize	refer		
reinforce	mislead	reflect		
reiterate	protest	relate		
strengthen	qualify	reveal		
support	refute	simplify		
validate	reject	teach		
verify	renounce	testify		
vouch	weaken	wonder		

Adapted from:

Teri Marshall, *APSI 2018* (San Antonio: St. Mary's Hall, 2018)

Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say*: 3rd edition (W. W. Norton & Company, 2014)