

Strong Verbs



THE WRITING CENTER

JUDITH G. GARDNER CENTER FOR WRITING EXCELLENCE

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 - add - affirm - agree - allude - amplify - clarify - complement - concede - connect - correlate - corroborate - endorse - enforce - enhance - laud - legitimize - link - magnify - maximize - praise - promote - reaffirm - reinforce - reiterate - strengthen - support - validate - verify - vouch	- accuse - attack - blame - complain - complicate - condemn - confuse - contend - contradict - criticize - defend - defy - deny - deride - detract - diminish - disagree - discourage - dismiss - insult - invalidate - lament - minimize - mislead - protest - qualify - refute - reject - renounce - weaken	- address - balance - characterize - compare - declare - define - discover - display - effect - emphasize - epitomize - establish - evaluate - exemplify - formulate - illustrate - imply - indicate - interpret - juxtapose - observe - point out - refer - reflect - relate - reveal - simplify - teach - testify - wonder	- cause - entail - evoke - evolve - incite - infer - justify - render - reward	- ascertain - beg - demand - inquire - plead - question - speculate - suggest
			Making Recommendations - advocate - encourage - exhort - implore - propose - recommend - urge - warn	
			Adapted from: Teri Marshall, <i>APSI 2018</i> (San Antonio: St. Mary's Hall, 2018) Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, <i>They Say/I Say</i> : 3rd edition (W. W. Norton & Company, 2014)	