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 ____________________.

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 chosen 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 ________________.