

Incorporating a Citation in your Writing: Words Instead of “say” or “write”

In academic writing, we refer to the research and ideas of others by choosing an appropriate **reporting verb**, and these can range in strength, from negative, through neutral to strong. These are alternatives to the words “said” and wrote”. When you make your choice of reporting verb, you need to consider the nuances of meaning to ensure you give an accurate interpretation of the writer’s ideas and intentions. Reporting verbs are usually used in the present tense, for facts and current evidence that have not changed, and for general truths. However, there are occasions when the past tense is appropriate, when the situation now may have changed.

Have a look at the examples below.

Smith (2013) **reasons** that communication skills are essential to building effective nurse-patient relationships.

In her presentation, although Smith (2013) **reiterated** her belief that communication skills are essential..., she **added** that attitude towards patients also affects...

In her presentation, Smith (2013) **challenged** the claim that communication skills were the only ingredient necessary for building...

Jones (2013) **concurs that** communication skills are essential to building...

In his study on building effective nurse-student relationships, Jones (2013) **endorses** the idea that communication skills are essential...

Nevertheless, Jones (2013) **highlights** the value of communications skills as being essential to building... while **emphasising** the need for...

The following list is classified according to strength. However, do not feel bound by this classification; rather, choose the most appropriate word for the context. The list has been given in the present tense; you may need to change the tense to the past.

Neutral Usually to present the facts	Tentative More speculative, not absolutely certain	Strong Making a strong argument, either positive or negative Positive Negative	
allege analyse comment conclude consider define describe discuss echo examine expand explain find mention note observe outline point out present put forward reflect report state study theorise	assume claim develop deliberate hypothesise identify imply indicate inquire intimate maintain ponder postulate propose put forward question reason recommend speculate suggest suppose take into consideration theorise	add affirm agree assert believe claim clarify concur contend contribute determine emphasise endorse highlight maintain point out prove reason reveal show stress support	argue cast doubt challenge counter disagree disprove rebuff refute reject

References

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