

They Say/I Say Checklist

Chapter 3, "The Art of Quoting."

Wherever you quote,

- Use each passage in a "quotation sandwich" (Graff 46) that consists of 2-3 sentences.
- Use templates to introduce and explain quotations (pages 46 and 47) and
- use action verbs like those on page 39-40.
- Add text so your quotations aren't "hit-and-run," (page 44),
- make sure that the quotation is relevant to what you're saying about it (page 43) and
- blend it with your words (page 49).

Chapter 4, "Three Ways to Respond"

- identify all the places that you are indirectly or directly engaging with the ideas of your sources.
- where you agree with your source, employ a template from They Say/I Say, page 62 or 64, and continue with additional thoughts and explanation. This is an essay about your ideas, so spend plenty of time on why you agree
- where you strongly disagree with your source, employ a template from They Say/I Say, page 60, and continue with additional argument supporting your disagreement and explaining what is true instead.
- where you respond in a complicated or contradictory way, write about it while employing a template from They Say/I Say, page 65-66, and add more, explaining both where you are thinking in parallel to your source, and where your thinking diverges from it, and why.

Chapter 5, "Distinguishing What You Say from What They Say"

- check to make sure whose ideas you're working with (it could be someone your source is referring to)
- Signal who is saying what (page 71)
- Use "I" when needed (page 73)
- Use "another trick" (page 73)
- Embed "voice markers" (page 75).

Chapter 7 "Saying Why It Matters"

- Somewhere in each of your paragraphs, identify or add a "why does it matter" statement that connects what you're saying in that paragraph to what you're trying to show or prove in your essay as a whole.
- Either add a new paragraph, or substantially re-shape your draft introduction or conclusion, so that they address the big picture, by answering the "who cares?" or "so what?" question.

Chapter 8."Connecting the Parts"

These strategies are most useful in paragraphs that are substantially complete. Therefore:

- If you write very long paragraphs, subdivide them into paragraphs of 15 or so lines.
- If you write very short paragraphs, elaborate on and provide logical support for your thinking.
- Figure out what the paragraph is showing or proving, and if there's no sentence overtly stating that purpose, write one.
- Reconsider the order of your ideas, and add additional argument and explanation if needed.

Then, use these strategies:

- use transitions (page 109-110);
- use "pointing words" (113);
- repeat key terms (114);
- repeat yourself (115)

Chapter 10 "The Art of Meta-Commentary"

Employing meta-commentary can also will help you to figure out a big-picture plan for the flow of ideas in your essay. But please be aware, if your draft is very undeveloped or incomplete, you must review the meta-commentary again when it is complete.

- Mess around with your essay title, and experiment with subtitles, to give your readers a roadmap through your argument.
- Employ templates from the chapter, one or more per paragraph of your draft, to add to or further clarify your argument.
- Employ templates from the chapter to signal your reader about how to read your essay.