

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE OF RESEARCH— ACKNOWLEDGING

When you acknowledge an anticipated question or objection, you can give it more or less weight. You can mention and dismiss it, summarize it quickly, or address it at length. Do not dismiss a position that your readers take seriously; do not address at length one for which you have no good response.

Use the following language and sentence stems to help you acknowledge anticipated questions or objections.

1. You can downplay an alternative by summarizing it in a short phrase introduced with *despite*, *regardless of*, or *notwithstanding*. You can also use *although*, *while*, and *even though*:
[Despite / Regardless of / Notwithstanding] the governor's claims that she wants to cut taxes, *acknowledgment* the public believes that . . . *response*
[Although / While / Even though] the governor claims that she wants to cut taxes, *acknowledgment* the public believes that . . . *response*
2. You can signal an alternative with *seem* or *appear*, or with a qualifying adverb, such as *plausibly*, *reasonably*, *understandably*, *surprisingly*, *foolishly*, or even *certainly*.
 In his letters, Mozart expresses what **[seems / appears]** to be depression, *acknowledgment* But those who observed him . . . *response*
 Liberals **[plausibly / reasonably / foolishly / etc.]** argue that the arts ought to be supported by taxes, *acknowledgment* But we all know . . . *response*
3. You can acknowledge an alternative without naming its source. This gives it just a little weight.
 It is easy to **[think / imagine / say / claim / argue]** that taxes should . . .
 There is **[another / alternative / possible / standard]** **[explanation / argument / possibility]** . . .
 Some evidence **[might / can / could / would / does]** **[suggest / indicate / lead some to think]** that we should . . .
4. You can acknowledge an alternative by attributing it to a more or less specific source. This construction gives it more weight.
 There are **[some / many / few]** who **[might / could / would]** **[say / think / claim / charge / object]** that climate change is not . . .
[Most / Many / Some / A few] administrators **[say / think / claim / charge / object]** that researchers . . .
 Jones **[says / thinks / claims / charges / objects]** that students . . .
5. You can acknowledge an alternative in your own voice or with concessive adverbs such as *admittedly*, *granted*, *to be sure*, and so on. This construction concedes that the alternative has some validity, but by changing the words, you can qualify how much validity you acknowledge.
 I **[understand / know / realize / appreciate]** that conservatives believe in . . .
 It is **[true / possible / likely / certain / must be admitted]** that no good evidence proves that coffee causes cancer . . .
[Granted / Admittedly / True / To be sure / Certainly / Of course], Sánchez stated . . .
 We **[could / can / might / would]** **[say / argue / claim / think]** that spending on the arts supports subversive . . .
 We have to **[consider / raise]** the **[question / possibility / probability]** that further study **[could / might / will]** show crime has not . . .
 We cannot **[overlook / ignore / dismiss / reject]** the fact that the Cubs are . . .