Active Verbs

Acquiring a rich repertoire of signal words and phrases is the key to success in representing others’ ideas in academic writing. The list below provides some examples of strong verbs to use in signal phrases. Remember, APA recommends the use of past tense or present perfect tense of verbs if the discussion is of past events. Use present tense to discuss implications of research results or to report conclusions. (Sources: Purdue OWL, APA Publication Manual, 6th ed.)

- Acknowledge
- Address
- Argue
- Ascribe
- Assert
- Attempt
- Believe
- Charted
- Claims
- Clarify
- Collect
- Conclude
- Concur (agree)
- Confirm
- Consider
- Contend
- Critique
- Describe
- Demonstrate
- Diagnose
- Emphasize
- Envision
- Examine
- Evaluate
- Formulate
- Found
- Gear
- Hold
- Identify
- Indicate
- Inspect
- Interpret
- Investigate
- Maintain
- Note
- Organize
- Offer
- Present
- Provide
- Rate
- Realize
- Report
- Review
- Summarize
- Survey