Reporting verbs

These verbs are used when citing ideas or information from other writers – for reporting, commenting on, or critiquing such information.

“The author ___________ that immigration is out of control.”
(stated / noted / observed / etc.)

When you use these verbs you are indicating something about the author's statement that follows the verb. Note: some verb (indicated with an asterisk (*), can not be used without making other changes to the sentence.

Non-Evaluative: You are not evaluating the author's statement.

- **state**: you are not making a comment on the author's statement.
- **report**: you are not making a comment on the author's statement.

Evaluation: The verb communicates your evaluation of the writer's statement.

- **claim**: you are saying this is what the author says is true, but imply you might not agree.
- **allege**: you are saying this is what the author says is true, but s/he offers little or no proof.
- **assert**: you are saying this is what the author says, but imply you might not agree.
- **propose**: you are saying that this is what the author says, but you are not convinced.
- **think**: you are saying that this is the opinion of the author, but you do not share this opinion.
- **believe**: you are saying that this is what the author thinks is true, but you are not as certain.

Evaluation and importance: The verb tells the reader the importance the writer gives to the statement in his/her writing.

- **stress or emphasize**: you are saying the author gives a sense of importance to this idea in his/her writing.
- **point out**: you are saying that the author gives some importance to this idea or fact(s) in his/her writing.
- **mention**: you are saying that the author makes this statement, but that it is not an important part of his/her main idea.
Evaluative and writer's purpose: The verb tells the reader about the writer’s purpose with regard to the statement.

- **explain**: you are saying that the author is making this statement clear through his/her writing.
- **describe**: you are saying that the author is giving a picture with his/her words of the statement.
- **argue**: you are saying that the author presents reasons for his/her statement, but you may disagree.
- **illustrate, show**: you are saying that the author shows facts or reasons for his/her statement.
- **reveal**: you are saying that the author shows facts or reasons for his/her statement that were perhaps unknown before.
- **present**: you are saying that the author shows facts or reasons for his/her statement.
- **indicate**: you are saying that the author gives reasons or facts for his or her statement, but this may not be the author's primary purpose.

Evaluation – writer’s intent: The verb indicates that this is your understanding of what the writer means, although he/she does not directly say this.

- **suggest**: you are saying that the author wants his/her readers to consider the possibility of this statement being true.
- **imply**: you are saying that the author did not make this statement, but what he/she has written gives you this idea.

Evaluative – writer’s doubt: The verb indicates the writer’s uncertainty regarding the statement.

- **question**: you are saying that the author is not sure he agrees with this statement.
- **doubt**: you are saying that the author is not sure he agrees with this statement.

Evaluative – writer’s disagreement: The verb indicates that the writer disagrees with the statement.

- **disagree**: you are saying that the author does not agree with this statement.
- **dispute**: you are saying that the author does not agree with this statement.
- **contradict**: you are saying the author disagrees with the statement.
- **refute**: you are saying the author proves this statement is inaccurate.
- **denies**: you are saying that the author believes this statement is incorrect.

*Other changes in the sentence are needed for using such verbs, especially those indicated with asterisks; e.g., some verbs need to be followed by prepositions (disagree with), direct objects (presented X), how-clauses (showed how to), or the conjunction that (suggest that, show that). For more on the grammatical patterns of such verbs, see the longer reporting verb handout at [http://www.bit.ly/kentlee7 > ‘Writing aids’](http://www.bit.ly/kentlee7 > ‘Writing aids’).