

# ACADEMIC LANGUAGE OF RESEARCH— HOW TO POSITION YOUR IDEA

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You may need to find your topic and question in relation to something you read, either because your teacher assigned a text or because you have found a writer or a work that interests you. In that case, look for surprises, puzzles, or disagreements. Or you can also look for ways to make the text itself your guide.

Here are some common sentence stems that can help get your ideas in writing, particularly in the preliminary stages of your project:

1. **Kind:** “Smith claims that \_\_\_\_\_ belongs in category A, but I will show that it really belongs in category B.”

Smith claims that fringe religious groups are “cults” because of their strange beliefs, but I will show that those beliefs are no different in kind from standard religions.

2. **Part-Whole:** “Smith claims that [*whole*] always has [*part*] as one of its defining features/ components/qualities, but I will show that [*part*] is not essential.”

Smith claims that competition is the essence of sport, but I will show that, even by her standards, competition is only incidental to the way most people actually play sports.

3. **Change:** “Smith claims that \_\_\_\_\_ is changing in a certain way, but I will show that it is really the same as it was.”

Smith claims that social media will kill off mainstream media, but I will show that mainstream media will find ways to survive because people still want what only they can offer.

4. **Cause and Effect:** “Smith claims that \_\_\_\_\_ causes \_\_\_\_\_, but I will show that it really causes \_\_\_\_\_.”

Smith claims that persistent poverty causes crime, but I will show that it really causes despair, which sometimes leads to crime and sometimes does not.