

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE OF RESEARCH— ACKNOWLEDGING AND RESPONDING

Recall that a research argument is not a one-sided lecture to passive listeners but a two-sided conversation in which you speak with and for your readers. You must *acknowledge* the questions and objections your readers might raise and then *respond* to them.

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

Forms for Acknowledging

1. You can downplay an alternative by summarizing it in a short phrase introduced with *despite*, *regardless of*, *notwithstanding*, *although*, *while*, or *even though*.

Despite Congress's claims that it 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, Lincoln expresses what appears to be depression. acknowledgment *But those who observed him . . .* response

3. You can acknowledge an alternative without naming its source. This gives it just a little weight. If you name the source, that gives it more weight.

Some evidence might suggest that we should . . .

Jones claims that we should . . .

4. You can acknowledge an alternative in your own voice or with adverbs such as *admittedly*, *granted*, *to be sure*, and so on. This construction admits that the alternative has some validity, but by changing the words, you can qualify how valid you think it is.

We have to **raise** the **possibility** that further study **might** show . . .

We have to **consider** the **probability** that further study **will** show . . .

Forms for Responding

1. You can state that you don't entirely understand someone's objection.

It is not clear to me that . . .

2. Or you can state that there are unsettled issues with someone's objection.

But there are other issues . . .

3. You can respond more bluntly by claiming the acknowledged person is irrelevant or unreliable.

But the evidence is unreliable . . .