

# ACTIVE VERBS SAY WHAT YOU MEAN

## Textual or Active Verbs for Discussing Ideas\*

informs	protects	cautions	confronts
reviews	insists	shares	regards
states	handles	convinces	toys with
argues	confuses	declares	hypothesizes
synthesizes	intimates	ratifies	suggests
asserts	simplifies	analyzes	contradicts
claims	narrates	affirms	considers
answers	outlines	exaggerates	highlights
responds	allows	observes	disconfirms
critiques	initiates	substitutes	admires
illuminates	supports	resolves	uncovers
determines	compares	assaults	hesitates
challenges	distinguishes	disputes	denies
experiments	describes	conflates	refutes
pleads	sees	reconciles	demands
experiences	assists	retorts	assembles
defends	persuades	complicates	criticizes
reconsiders	quotes	reads	diminishes
verifies	exposes	parses	shows
provides	believes	stresses	accepts
formulates	categorizes	facilitates	buttresses
qualifies	disregards	contrasts	relinquishes
hints	tests	discusses	treats
repudiates	postulates	guides	clarifies
infers	acknowledges	proposes	grants
marshals	defies	points out	insinuates
summarizes	accepts	judges	identifies
disagrees	emphasizes	enumerates	explains
rationalizes	confirms	reveals	interprets
shifts	praises	condemns	adds
maintains	supplies	implies	persists
seeks	reminds	concludes	supplements
announces	warns		

- Replace the weak "The author says . . ." type statements with these powerful *textual* verbs that give indication of intensity or meaning and intent.
- Use textual verbs to indicate what your sentences actually do.
- Whenever you quote from a text, introduce the quotation with a tag phrase that includes a textual verb as these to that exemplifies what the author of the passage wants to impart to the reader. Read the quote and choose the best verb.
- Beware the subtle differences of meanings of words and don't repeat the same verb/word in two close sentences. Key Shift + F7 to use the Thesaurus in MS Word for alternate words.

\*Source: The Curious Researcher by Bruce Ballenger; used by permission of Cinthia Gannett for Purdue Owl  
<http://www.pnc.edu/engl/writingcenter/actvb.html>

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