

Academic culture -- and the world of essay-writing -- is a great big discussion between many, many people. You don't always have to disagree. Disagreeing is a way of adding something to a discussion, but not the only way. As Paul Fortunato points out¹, there are a number of ways to respond to your sources:

- *disagree* with some key statement.
- *agree* with something the [author] says, and then say even more about it than he or she did
- point to something the critic says that seems *to go contrary* to something else he or she says
- point to something the critic says and give a *counter example*...
- argue with the critic by showing that he or she is *leaving out* some key aspect of the [issue] or some key issue of the argument
- blow [the author] out of the water by showing that he or she is *totally wrong*
- *praise* [the author] for making an extremely important point, and then *add something* important to that point.

For the following exercise, you will use almost the same template as last time -- but paraphrase the two authors in your own words -- and then you will agree or disagree with their argument.

Here's the main template:

TITLE: _____

PARAGRAPH 1:

The general argument made by AUTHOR X in his or her essay, _____, is that _____ . More specifically, X argues that _____ . She/He writes, " _____ ." In this passage, X is suggesting that _____ . In conclusion, X's belief is that _____ .

PARAGRAPH 2:

But according to AUTHOR Y's view, AUTHOR X must be wrong/right, because _____ . More specifically, Y seems to believe that _____ . For example, Y writes that " _____ ." Y seems to disagree with X on the issue of _____ . X thinks that _____ , while Y maintain that _____ . Therefore, Y concludes that _____ .

Then you can add your own opinion!

As for **PARAGRAPH 3**, since it's impossible to know what your own response will be, I've included a set of possible templates you could use for your third paragraph, where you respond to AUTHORS X AND Y with your own opinion.

¹ Graff, Gerald. Clueless in Academe: How Schooling Obscures the Life of the Mind. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003.

Here are some templates add-ons for those moves, which you can append to the previous template:

disagree with some key statement

In fact, I disagree with X [or Y]'s claim that _____. I think that _____ . X [and/or Y]'s claim that, " _____," is wrong because _____. In fact, _____. Therefore, I must conclude that _____.

agree with something the [author] says, and then say even more about it than he or she did

In fact, I strongly agree with X [or Y]'s claim that _____. I think that _____ . X [and/or Y]'s claim that, " _____," is correct because _____. In addition, it is worth considering _____. For example, _____. Therefore, I must conclude that _____.

point to something the critic says that seems to go contrary to something else he or she says

In fact, I think there are problems with X [or Y]'s argument that _____. X [and/or Y]'s claim that, " _____," but then he [or she] contradicts himself [or herself] by arguing that _____. In fact, _____. Therefore, I must conclude that _____.

point to something the critic says and give a counter example...

In fact, there are problems with X [or Y]'s argument that _____. X [and/or Y]'s claim that, " _____," is not absolutely true. For example, _____. In fact, _____. Therefore, I must conclude that _____.

argue with the critic by showing that he or she is leaving out some key aspect of the [issue] or some key issue of the argument

In fact, I think there are problems with X [or Y]'s argument that _____. When X [and/or Y] claims that, " _____," he [or she] ignores the fact that _____. For example, _____. Because of this, we must agree that _____. Therefore, I must conclude that _____.

blow [the author] out of the water by showing that he or she is totally wrong

However, X [or Y]'s argument that _____ is wrong. When X [and/or Y] claims that, " _____," he [or she] doesn't have the facts straight. In fact, _____. For example, _____. Therefore, because X [or Y] has based an argument on false information, I must conclude that _____.

praise [the author] for making an extremely important point, and then add something important to that point.

In fact, I strongly agree with X [or Y]'s claim that _____. I think that _____ . X [and/or Y]'s claim that, " _____," is correct because _____. But that's not all! It is important to consider aspects of SUBJECT that X [and/or Y] did not address, such as _____ and _____. For example, _____. Therefore, I must conclude that _____.

All of these templates can be used to build the third paragraph of your response.