

YORKWAC Infobase

Using Evidence

Evidence is the published data or expert opinion that you cite to support the claims you make in a research paper.

FUN FACT: *evidence* comes from the Latin verb *videre*, **to see**. Evidence allows us to see that something is factual or true.

Here is an example of a claim and the evidence that the claim is based on:

1. *Claim:*

Total emissions of greenhouse gases in the United States increased steadily from 2000 to 2005.

2. *Evidence:*

U.S. Emissions of Greenhouse Gases, 2000-2006						
(Million Metric Tons of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent)						
Greenhouse Gas	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Carbon Dioxide	5,806.9	5,880.5	5,938.7	6,023.9	6,032.3	5,945.8
Methane	670.1	674.2	676.5	679.7	679.4	686.9
Nitrous Oxide	339.3	335.4	334.6	361.5	370.8	375.7
HFCs, PFCs, and SF ₆	141.4	153.6	149.0	165.0	174.5	171.3
Total	6,957.7	7,043.7	7,098.8	7,230.1	7,256.9	7,179.7

Notice that total emissions went down slightly in 2006 compared to 2005; but the claim refers only to the years 2000 to 2005, when the totals continued to increase.

Evidence must come from reliable *sources* and be properly *cited*. The table above comes from a government document that would be cited as follows:

Energy Information Administration. (2008). *Emissions of Greenhouse Gases in the United States 2007* DOE/EIA-0573(2007). Washington, DC: Office of Integrated Analysis and Forecasting, U.S. Department of Energy.

The **YORKWAC Infobase** includes many other Infosheets that can help you with your writing assignment.

If you want more information on using evidence, you might want to try:

Infosheet #13, Making Claims

Infosheet #15, Types of Sources

Infosheet #16, Citing Sources