A. Using one of the “Verbs for Making a Claim” in They Say, I Say, (argue, assert, believe, claim, emphasize, insist, observe, remind us, report, or suggest (39)), write a sentence or two summarizing Naomi Wolf’s claims below. Use a different verb(s) for each summary.

1. During the past decade, women breached the power structure; meanwhile eating disorders rose exponentially and cosmetic surgery became the fastest growing medical specialty. During the past five years, consumer spending doubled, pornography became the main media category, ahead of legitimate films and records combined, and thirty three thousand American women told researchers that they would rather lose ten to fifteen pounds than achieve any other goal. More women have more money and power and scope and legal recognition than we have ever had before; but in terms of how we feel about ourselves physically, we may actually be worse off than our unliberated grandmothers. Recent research consistently shows that inside the majority of the West’s controlled, attractive, successful working women, there is a secret “underlife” poisoning our freedom; infused with notion of beauty is a dark vein of self-hatred, physical obsession, terror of aging and dreaded lost control.

It is no accident that so many potentially powerful women feel this way. We are in the midst of a violent backlash against feminism that uses images of female beauty as a political weapon against women’s advancement: the beauty myth. (1)

2. The beauty myth tells a story: The quality called “beauty” objectively and universally exists. Women must want to embody it and men must want to possess women who embody it. This embodiment is an imperative for women and not for men, which situation is necessary and natural because it is biological, sexual and evolutionary: Strong men battle for beautiful women, and beautiful women are more reproductively successful. Women’s beauty must correlate with their fertility, and since this system is based on sexual selection, it is inevitable and changeless.

None of this is true. “Beauty” is a currency system like the gold standard. Like any economy, it is determined by politics, and in the modern age in the West, it is the last, best belief system that keeps male dominance intact. In assigning value to women in a vertical hierarchy according to a culturally imposed physical standard, it is an expression of power relations in which women must unnaturally compete for resources that men have appropriated for themselves. (2 – 3)

B. Practice the “quotation sandwich” technique introduced in chapter 3 of They Say, I Say by framing the following quotations between one of the Templates for Introducing Quotations (46) and one of the Templates for Explaining Quotations (47). Use different template “slices” for each quotation.

**Templates for Introducing Quotations**

- X states, “…..”
- As the prominent (educator/writer/etc.) puts it, “….”
- According to X, “….”
- X him/herself writes, “….’
- Writing in the essay “Y,” X complains that “….”
- In X’s view, “….”
- X agrees when s/he writes, “….”
X complicates matters further when s/he writes, “...”

Templates for Explaining Quotations
- Basically, X is warning....
- In other words, X believes....
- X is corroborating the age-old adage that....
- X’s point is that....
- The essence of X’s argument is that....

1. “But in spite of shame, guilt, and denial, more and more women are wondering if it isn’t that they are entirely neurotic and alone but rather that something important is indeed at stake that has to do with the relationship between female liberation and female beauty” (1).

2. “There is no legitimate historical or biological justification for the beauty myth; what it is doing to women today is a result of nothing more exalted than the need of today’s power structure, economy, and culture to mount a counteroffensive against women” (3).

3. “If the beauty myth is not based on evolution, sex, gender, aesthetics, or God, on what is it based? It claims to be about intimacy and sex and life, a celebration of women. It is actually composed of emotional distance, politics, finance, and sexual repression. The beauty myth is not about women at all. It is about men’s institutions and institutional power” (4).

C. Using one of They Say, I Say’s “Templates for Disagreeing, with Reasons” (60), “Templates for Agreeing” (62) (keeping in mind “[e]ven as you’re agreeing, it’s important to bring something new and fresh to the table, adding something that makes you a valuable participant in the conversation” (61)), or “Templates for Agreeing and Disagreeing Simultaneously” (65-66), frame your response to Naomi Wolf’s statements below in a sentence or so. Feel free to add a sentence or two beyond the template to elaborate your position, as necessary. Use a different template for each quotation.

Templates for Disagreeing, with Reasons
- X is mistaken because s/he overlooks....
- X’s claim that ... rests upon the questionable assumption that....
- I disagree with X’s view that ... because, as recent research has shown,....
- X contradicts him/herself (or can’t have it both ways). On the one hand, s/he argues.... On the other hand, s/he also says....
- By focusing on ..., X overlooks the deeper problem of....

Templates for Agreeing
- I agree that ... because my experience ... confirms it.
- X is surely right about ... because, as s/he may not be aware, recent studies have shown that....
- X’s theory of ... is extremely useful because it sheds light on the difficult problem of....
Those unfamiliar with this school of thought may be interested to know that it basically boils down to ....
I agree that …, a point that needs emphasizing since so many people still believe ....
If X is right that …, as I think s/he is, then we need to reassess the popular assumption that ....

**Templates for Agreeing and Disagreeing Simultaneously**

- Although I agree with X up to a point, I cannot accept his/her overriding assumption that ....
- Although I disagree with much that X says, I fully endorse his/her final conclusion that ....
- Though I concede that ..., I still insist that ....
- X is right that ..., but s/he seems on more dubious ground when s/he claims that ....
- While X is probably wrong when s/he claims that ..., s/he is right that ....
- I’m of two minds about X’s claims that .... On the one hand, I agree that .... On the other hand, I’m not sure if ....
- My feelings on the issue are mixed. I do support X’s position that ..., but I find Y’s argument about ... to be equally persuasive.

1. “’Beauty’ is not universal, or changeless, though the West pretends that all ideals of female beauty stem from one Platonic Ideal Woman” (3).

2. “The qualities that a given period calls beautiful in women are merely symbols of the female behavior that that period considers desirable. The beauty myth is always actually prescribing behavior and not appearance” (4).

3. “An ideology that makes women feel worthless was urgently needed to counteract the way feminism had begun to make us feel worth more” (7).