



WRITING A CONCLUSION

An effective conclusion encourages your reader to reflect on your paper with interest and provides them with an opportunity to understand the broader importance of your main idea.

Start with a SUMMARY OF YOUR MAIN POINT

In the same way that most introductions will end with a thesis, many conclusions will start with a summary of your main point. The summary of your main point, however, should not simply restate your thesis using different words. Since your reader has now had a chance to see and evaluate your argument, the summary of your main point can be more detailed, explicit, and developed.

Try paraphrasing your thesis here: _____

What more could you do at the end to make it more detailed, explicit or developed?: _____

SUMMARIZE YOUR ARGUMENT (as necessary).

Some conclusions also contain a more detailed summary of the topics you have covered, and perhaps even some of your evidence or analysis. Unless your instructor asks for a summarizing conclusion, though, you probably do not need to summarize this much in order to make sure your reader is able to remember what you have said—unless your paper is longer than seven pages.

Add a NEW SIGNIFICANCE OR APPLICATION based on your purpose and the type of essay.

This will deepen your reader’s understanding or emphasize the significance of your main idea.

Check all the options you might use in your conclusion; a combination may work best.

- Challenge the reader to act
- Offer an analogy, a metaphor, or a vivid description
- Identify the significance of your topic for issues in the “real world”
- Offer a “moral” or a lesson the reader should have learned
- If the issue you wrote about has been resolved, explain the solution to the reader
- Suggest solutions or changes for the future; offer a prediction
- Ask a rhetorical question that encourages the reader to keep thinking about your topic
- Conclude with a personal connection or story, or a final example
- End with a relevant quotation that reflects your main ideas
- Connect your topic with concepts from your class readings, lectures, and discussion
- Call for more research on your topic

ECHO YOUR INTRO?

Many readers enjoy conclusions that bring them back in some way to the hook that you used in the intro, by referring to that same fact, quote or story.

Ideas for your conclusion: _____

Make sure you read your assignment sheet: it may tell you what kind of conclusion you should use!