

Many writers underestimate the value of a conclusion and spend very little time crafting it. However, it really should be one of the most powerful and carefully worded paragraphs in the essay. After all, the conclusion is your last chance to make an impression or convince the reader of your point.

Your conclusion should:

- Stress the importance of your thesis statement.
- Give the essay a sense of completeness.
- Make a strong final impression on the reader.

Things to Avoid:

- Don't simply restate your ideas in your conclusion without making significant alterations in the wording.
- Don't introduce a new point in your conclusion.
- Avoid using trite concluding phrases such as: "in conclusion", "in summary", or "finally". Often these phrases are used in speeches, but they are rarely a good way to end a written paper.
- Don't apologize for your stance or minimize your insights. Be confident in the knowledge you have acquired during your research.

Strategies for composing a conclusion:

- Ask yourself these questions: Why should your reader care about what you wrote? What is the most important thing for your reader to take away from this paper? Is there an action you want to encourage your reader to take? Are there any thoughts you want to highlight? Use the answers to any of those questions to formulate your conclusion.
- Synthesize the ideas in your paper, but don't summarize. If you simply repeat what you wrote before, you will lose your reader's attention at a critical point. Rather, combine the ideas expressed in your paper in a different way, creating a new whole, rather than simply repeating what you wrote before.
- End with a thought that will make your readers apply what you've written to their own lives or to a situation around them.
- Demonstrate how your ideas work together to back up your ideas or conclusion.
- Bring your reader full-circle by echoing themes from your introduction. You might do this by returning to an opening scene, reiterating key words from your introduction, or using a parallel concept.
- Close with a powerful quote, an interesting anecdote, a thought provoking question, or startling fact to stir your reader.