



WRITER'S STUDIO RESOURCES:



CONCLUSION PARAGRAPHS

What is a conclusion paragraph?

A conclusion paragraph is the last paragraph in your essay. You use it to wrap up your thoughts and bring everything together, making sure you don't leave any loose ends.

Why do I need a conclusion paragraph?

The conclusion brings the reader out of the paper and makes them think about the real-life implications of the issue. You should finalize your thoughts while also offering something more for the reader to think about—offering them a take-away.

Try one of the following to create an effective conclusion:

Come full circle

Don't re-summarize, but show how the points you made and the evidence you used fit together.

Answer the "so what?" question

Show why the paper was important—how/why it was meaningful and useful.

Acknowledge the limits of the argument

Admitting that there are holes in the argument can open up the conversation for others to fill in those holes with further research.

Propose a course of action or offer a solution

By doing one of these, you wrap up your ideas by providing some sort of resolution to the issue(s) you discussed.

Echo the introduction

If you began with an anecdote or scenario, come back to it.

**See our introduction handout*

Pose a question

Posing a question makes the reader think to the future, and it opens the conversation again for others to continue where you left off.



While the criteria may vary by discipline or professor preference, these are the most common guidelines for a university essay.



Crafting a Conclusion

What to avoid in the conclusion paragraph:

Giving another summary

A summary of the paper should go into the introduction, not the conclusion. The readers already know what the paper is about, so giving a summary at the end becomes repetitive and redundant.

Introducing new evidence

The conclusion is the place to wrap up your ideas, not introduce new ones. If you have more evidence you want to include, consider adding another body paragraph to your essay.

Saying "in conclusion"

Although it is common in high school to use this to conclude an essay, it is typically frowned upon in academic writing because it is overused and cliché.

Let's take a look at an example:

Notice how the author begins the conclusion with a quick recap of the main points.

*Iago's rhetorical skills, paired with his universally regarded honest reputation, are what allow him to manipulate the other characters' perceptions of each other and of the events of the play. His ability to argue either side of an issue equally convincingly gives him the power to sway the others into desirable actions or states of mind which allow his plot to progress. **The focus in these two speeches on the value and merit of reputations is particularly poignant for his character, however, as he proves through his words, his actions, and his own manipulation of the false reputation he holds both the power and the unreliability of reputations. Iago relies heavily on the perception that he is unfailingly loyal and honest to get others to believe in what he says, and he manipulates the perceptions of others' reputations in order to further his plot.** When Iago argues so convincingly for both the value and insignificance of reputations, there is a sense of his winking at the audience, as we are in on the "joke" (which plays out tragically) that it is all about perception.*

Finally, the author leaves a final impression by showing the effect of their interpretation of the evidence, answering the question: "So what?"

Here, the author shows how the evidence presented in the body of the essay fits together.