

# Writing a Conclusion

## WHAT IS A CONCLUSION?

The concluding paragraph should tie up loose ends and leave the reader with a sense of completion. If the paper is long, it reminds the readers of all the points they've just read, and leaves them with a few final thoughts to walk away with.

### An effective conclusion

- Reminds
- Contextualizes
- Dazzles

**Note:** Different disciplines have different requirements of what constitutes an appropriate conclusion. You should always consult your professor before beginning any writing assignment.

## Remind

Your concluding paragraph should restate the paper's main idea using different words. This is especially critical for longer, more complex papers, when the reader may not remember as far back as the first point made. The reader should be able to read just the conclusion and still understand the basic topic of the paper, the argument being made, and the paper's basic line of reasoning. The conclusion should also remind the reader of the paper's fundamental question and clearly summarize the answer. Make sure to use different words or this will seem redundant and forced.

## Contextualize

The concluding paragraph is a useful place to reinforce the reasons why the reader should care about the topic of your paper. This is your final opportunity to emphasize your main idea and answer the question, "So what?" the concluding paragraph should establish the larger context and relevance of your argument.

## Dazzle

The conclusion is the last thing your audience will read and is therefore what will be most easily remembered. You have the chance to pick a main idea that you hope your reader will walk away with and drive it home. To do this, try ending with a strong, motivating statement, a call to action, or a plea, whichever is most appropriate for your topic. Assume that by the time the reader reaches your conclusion, you've got him/her on your side. The conclusion, then, is your chance to really shine.