

How to Write Conclusions

This resource provides general strategies for writing effective conclusions for argumentative essays and short (five- to ten-page) research papers. To learn more about writing conclusions for subject-specific assignments like case study reports and journalistic writing, visit the [Subject-Specific Resources Page](#) at Purdue Online Writing Lab.



Probably the worst thing you can do in your final paragraph is simply restate your thesis and main points again. Your readers know what they've just read, so why should they have to read it again? But if you can't simply restate your points, what should you do with this last part of your paper? Your conclusion should show your readers why your ideas are meaningful to them. Rather than repeat points from your paper's body, however, you should remind readers how your arguments and supporting evidence fit together and why your view is ultimately the most practical one.

Strategies for Writing a Conclusion

1. Encourage your readers to recognize the seriousness of this issue. ("The issue of X must be addressed because...")
2. Briefly acknowledge your opponents' viewpoints on this issue ("I understand that some people would argue that . . .") before pointing out why your viewpoint is the most reasonable and logical one ("Ultimately, however, I argue that . . . because . . .").
3. Finally, state how your position, if adopted, will benefit your readers.

Other Strategies You Might Try

1. If you gave a story or scenario in your introduction, revisit it in your conclusion. How might this story or scenario end differently if your views were to be put into practice?
2. Encourage your readers to consider the future implications of your topic. Describe what might happen if the situation remains unchanged and what might happen if your views were to be adopted.
3. Pose a final question or two to keep readers thinking about the issue long after they've put down your paper.

To see how these strategies are used to create an effective conclusion, please refer to the sample conclusions below.

Sample Conclusions

Sample Conclusion #1: This sample conclusion is from peer tutor Hannah Brooks's argumentative essay, "Hope for the Hippies," which she completed for ENGL 103: Writing for a Discipline. Her paper's thesis is that "consuming oil is an inefficient and dangerous way to energize our world." This statement summarizes Hannah's overall view on energy consumption. In her paper's final paragraph, Hannah reemphasizes the importance of the issue of energy consumption and explains why her view on this issue is both reasonable and warranted. Hannah also encourages readers to consider the ramifications of energy consumption if other less costly sources of energy are not found.

I assure you that once all of the oil is gone, once all of the rainforests have been cut down, once the last of the endangered species has gone extinct, the world will look around and wonder what happened. Everyone will be astounded that such a thing has occurred, and it will be too late to go back and change our ways. I often wonder if the vivid green images of the tropical rainforests that seem so full of life in books and magazines will continue to exist that way if oil consumption continues at this rate. I am hopeful for the future, however. With new research into "clean" fuel, I hope to leave behind a world full of wonders and mysteries awaiting discovery for my children and grandchildren. I want them to witness turquoise oceans and crystal clear waters, not oil-slicked wastelands and ecosystems in ruins. Let's be proactive in the preservation of our environment. It is one of the purest and dearest inheritances we can leave to the generations of the future.

Sample Conclusion #2: This sample conclusion is from peer tutor Dennis Ryan's investigative report on common cold myths, entitled "Common Cold Buster: Cold Temperatures," which he completed for ENGL 103: Writing for a Discipline. Dennis's thesis is that taking off one's jacket outdoors in cold weather can actually prevent colds. In his closing paragraph, Dennis reminds readers of the soundness of his advice and urges them to follow his example.

To make the common cold a rarity for your health this winter, remember the important facts. First, common colds are a result of a more common rhinovirus, which you can guard against by simply washing your hands and taking off your jacket. Additionally, washing your hands can prevent common colds because your hands often touch your face, the leading place where colds invade your body. Likewise, occasionally

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taking off your jacket will cause your body to trigger its natural defenses against temperature changes and subsequently prevent viruses from entering your body. So, in order to avoid the common cold this season, just remind yourself that taking off your jacket once a day may keep the sniffles away!