



# Writing Effective Conclusions

Conclusions help us offer closure to readers as we offer our final thoughts and significance about a topic. A strong conclusion is so important for strong writing!

## What do I include in a conclusion?



A strong conclusion, for most writing projects, typically includes 3 main components (regardless of the genre of your project or the length of your conclusion):

### **1) A thoughtful re-emphasis of your thesis, assertion, argument, or purpose**

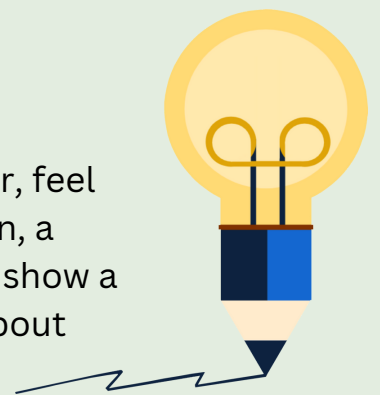
This is less about the wording of the thesis/main point and more about *why* it's important. Why does it matter? Remind your readers of the purpose and significance of your main idea/argument.

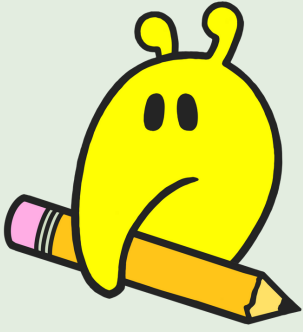
### **2) A reminder of the most salient and significant supporting points you've made throughout the paper**

This is also more about *why* it matters; you don't need to re-emphasize every single supporting point, just the most significant ones.

### **3) A compelling and valuable "takeaway" for your readers**

There is no right or wrong takeaway. Just whatever you, as the writer, feel your paper offers the reader in value. It could be a lesson, a question, a value/insight/attitude to take on, etc. The most effective takeaways show a reader how something is relevant to them-- why should they care about this?





## FAQs About Writing Conclusions

### Q: Why do I need a conclusion for my essay?

A: It's important to offer closure and a sense of significance and relevance for your readers. Papers that end abruptly or with no sense of purpose are often ineffective or confusing.

### Q: What if my professor asks for specific topics or ideas to be discussed in the conclusion?

A: Always defer to that instructor's specific requirements for an assignment. In general, this conclusion checklist works for any type of writing/genre. However, if your instructor requires you to discuss certain topics/questions in the conclusion, follow their instructions.

### Q: How do I make sure my conclusion doesn't read as a summary of my essay?

A: The **"takeaway"** at the end of the conclusion is the key to ensuring your conclusion paragraph/section doesn't come across as a mere summary of your entire paper. If you only re-emphasize or restate your thesis and supporting points, you're not moving beyond what you've already communicated. By clarifying the **significance** and **relevance** of your paper's purpose to readers, it avoids what might seem like repetition of your main points.

### Q: Should my conclusion include or provide any research/sources?

A: A conclusion should not include any NEW research or sources. It's okay to reference an idea from research you cited and discussed earlier in the essay, but there shouldn't be brand new information introduced for the first time in the conclusion. You don't want to confuse your readers with last-minute information!

### Q: How long should my conclusion be?

A: There's no rule for how long a conclusion should be; it depends upon your essay, but the key is that you thoughtfully develop each part of the checklist.

### Q: Where do I begin with writing a conclusion?

A: You can draft a conclusion at any point in your process that feels helpful for your thinking through this checklist and what you want to say. Just be sure to revisit throughout your drafting and revision process it to make sure it reflects the purpose of your paper accurately and effectively! :)

