

## Writing and Humanities Tutoring Center



### Writing an Effective Conclusion

The conclusion is the final paragraph in an essay that wraps up everything; think of it as the pretty bow or ribbon that is placed on a gift. Despite it being the final paragraph, a conclusion should reflect the same amount of dedicated effort as the rest of the essay and should be reflective.

#### Helpful Tips:

- Plan/outline your essay prior to starting it, including your conclusion. It is never too early to think about what you want to say in your conclusion. Waiting until you arrive at the conclusion section in your paper to think about your conclusion can make the writing process difficult and may cause unnecessary stress and worry.
- Many students have learned that the conclusion in an essay is just a restatement of the writer's argument; this can be partially true, depending on a professor's expectations. However, simply restating or even rephrasing the argument is repetitive. Instead, think about the following strategies:
  - A call to action. In other words, what should people do in the material world to address the general topic/issue/argument made in your paper?
  - A look to the future. Like the call to action, briefly addressing future consequences/general issues that might arise if the topic is addressed or ignored can help wrap up your paper.
- Unless your professor specifically requests it, refrain from starting your concluding paragraph with "in conclusion." Your reader(s) will know that you are concluding the paper because it will be the last paragraph. The phrase is, quite simply, overused and unnecessary.
- Do not end your conclusion with a quote. In fact, all paragraphs should start and end with your own words. It is important to maintain ownership of your writing. Ending with someone else's words rather than your own weakens that ownership by relying too heavily on the ideas of other writers.
- Avoid detailing or addressing new ideas or analysis. The conclusion is a way to "wrap things up." New ideas and analysis belong in body paragraphs.