Writing essay conclusions

# About conclusions

When writing concluding paragraphs for an essay, many writers tend to want to only repeat what they have already written in the paper. While it is important to remind the reader about the ideas presented in the paper, there are ways to make a conclusion more interesting and effective. Here are some tips:

* Do not add any new information here.
* Explain why all your analysis and information should matter to your readersafter they put the paper down.
* Make a good final impression and end on a positive note.
* Give your readers something to take away that will help them see things differently or appreciate your topic in personally relevant ways.
* Suggest broader implications that will not only interest your readers, but also enrich their lives in some way.

**Source:** *Conclusions*. The Writing Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. 29 April 2015. https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/conclusions/

# Writing an effective conclusion

One strategy called “SO WHAT?” may help you write an effective conclusion.

Think about/re-read the thesis statement in your introductory paragraph and the topic sentences from each body paragraph. Then, ask yourself why all this information is important for the reader…or “so what?”

## Example:

A student writer has just finished a persuasive paper on why police officers should wear body cameras. He made several good points in the body of his paper—cost of supplying police with technology vs cost of investigating/prosecuting perpetrators of a controversial event, distrust of police by society—and now needs to ask himself “Why is all this information so important?” His answer becomes the first sentence in his conclusion:

***Citizens and those who protect them need to know that they are accountable for their actions.***

After writing the first sentence, he continues to press for more by asking, “So, why is *this* important?” The answer becomes a clarifying sentence or sentence #2:

When people know they are being watched, they tend to behave better—police may be less confrontational and alleged perpetrators may be less inclined to react defensively or aggressively.

Now, he asks the question one last time: “And why is this important?” and his answer completes the conclusion:

If society is ever going to become less violent, those who live together need to trust each other; body cameras worn by each officer of the law may be the change communities need in order to move toward a more cooperative environment.

A successful conclusion is usually a short paragraph but one that says something profound to the reader and emphasizes the thesis statement using different words.

## Complete example:

Citizens and those who protect them need to know that they are accountable for their actions. When people know they are being watched, they tend to behave better--police may be less confrontational and alleged perpetrators may be less inclined to react defensively or aggressively. If society is ever going to become less violent, those who live together need to trust each other; body cameras worn by each officer of the law may be the change communities need in order to move toward a more cooperative environment.