

Conclusions

Compiled by Mrs. Day from “How to Write a Killer Essay” by Eden Meirow, “Ending the Essay: Conclusions” from the Harvard Writing Center, and “Writing Conclusions to Argumentative Essays” by Bill Daly

So much is at stake when writing a conclusion. This is, after all, your last chance to persuade your readers to your point of view, and to impress yourself upon them as a writer and thinker. The impression you create in your conclusion will shape the impression that stays with your readers after they've finished the essay.

The end of an essay should, therefore, convey a sense of completeness and closure, as well as a sense of the lingering possibilities of the topic - its larger meaning, its implications. The final paragraph should close the discussion *without closing it off*. A conclusion for an argumentative essay should remind your reader why the topic you've written about is important.

Do:

- 1) Restate your claim, BUT do so in a new way. They're called synonyms, people!
- 2) Summarize the reasons that support your claim, but (again) don't use the exact same language you've used earlier in the essay.
- 3) Include a call to action (something your reader should *do* to support your side), OR a warning of the consequences of NOT agreeing with your side of the argument.

*If you can - use descriptive language; paint a picture for your audience; stir their emotions. Doing those things help your reader connect to the subject even more than they already have.

Don't:

Don't simply summarize your essay. These argumentative essays are not long - one or two pages at most - so you don't have to summarize the whole thing.

Avoid phrases like “in conclusion,” “in summary,” and “to sum it up.” See, I know you're about to conclude your essay. Know how? I can see, with my eyes, that the essay is almost over! You'll irritate your audience by stating the obvious.

Resist the urge to apologize. You may have doubts that you've done a good job - that you've written well, or even that you chose the right side of the argument in the first place. Repress those doubts. Don't undercut your authority by saying things like, “This is only one side of the debate; there may be other, better opinions,” or “This is just what I think.” NO!

Argumentative Conclusion Examples:

It is evident that year-round schooling is not the right option for our county. Why change what's working so well, and what works for so many people? Let's make sure, when the final bell rings in May, that it really is the *final* bell.

Whether it's a mother and a father, a single mother, or a single father, children need guidance; they will become a product of what they are taught. Whatever your family structure, you must instill in your children the values that will turn them into happy, healthy, helpful adults.

Although some people fear that granting prisoners the right to vote may lead to more relaxed laws surrounding specific crimes, prisoners deserve that right because they are part of the American population. Our country deserves a true democratic process - one that includes everyone's voices, even those who have made mistakes.

One more note from Mrs. Day - I find that the concluding paragraph is often a great place to put my opposing claim and counterargument. If they don't come up naturally anywhere else in your essay, use that final paragraph to explain why any claim but yours simply doesn't make as much sense.