



Having trouble writing conclusions? Here are some useful tips.

Conclusions...The sentences that bring a written work to a close and provide readers with a sense of completion, with a sense that the writer has finished. Sometimes the final point in the body of an essay may accomplish this purpose, especially if it is very important or dramatic, but usually a separate conclusion is needed. It may be a single sentence or several paragraphs, depending on the length and complexity of the piece of writing, and depending on the writer's subject or purpose.

1. A summary of the essay's main points.
2. A statement of the essay's main idea, if it has not been previously stated, or a restatement of the main idea incorporating information from the body of the essay.
3. A comment on the significance or implications of the subject.
4. A suggestion about how readers can use the information in the essay.
5. A recommendation that readers support a proposal or action, or that they take some action themselves.
6. A prediction for the future.
7. An example, anecdote, question, or quotation that reinforces the point of the essay.

Excluded from this list are several endings that are best avoided because that tend to weaken the overall effect of an essay: (1) an example, fact, or quotation that pertains to only part of the essay (2) an apology for the writer's ideas, for the quality of the writing, or for omissions (3) an attempt to enlarge the significance of the essay by overgeneralizing from its ideas and evidence (4) a new idea that requires the support of an entirely different essay.

from Student Writers at Work

Also, remember to keep your conclusion in mind as you write the essay, jotting down ideas for the ending as they come to you. Allow time between the writing of the essay and its conclusion so that you will return to work with a fresh perspective.

Marko J. Miller