

WRITING A CONCLUSION

WHAT IS A CONCLUSION?

This is the final element of your essay. In a test setting, it is by far the least important. However, it can leave the reader with a fine last impression. It brings an argument or an explanation full circle. Where the previous paragraphs of the paper have given supporting detail, the conclusion comes back to the main point and states it convincingly.

WHY DO WE USE IT?

It brings closure. It can point the reader in a direction where they understand the bigger picture of your argument. A good conclusion is the hardest thing to write and in a test setting it is the least important. It is recommended that you not spend a lot of time on it during a test-unless you find yourself with extra time. As part of an out-of-class assignment, it is recommended to spend time writing and editing your conclusion.

WHAT IS THE MOST COMMON ERROR?

Students commonly make one of three mistakes: 1) Stating new information in the conclusion. 2) Restating the thesis word for word. 3) Failing to paint the big picture.

HOW DO I START?

Whenever possible, try to avoid merely summarizing what you have said and instead point the reader in a new direction, perhaps one which hints at why readers should care about the question. Try answering, “What conclusion can you make from the evidence you have presented?” No new information should be presented that is central to your essay, but a new idea is okay. Consider using a powerful quote as part of your conclusion. It will contribute to your argument.

BAD EXAMPLE ONE:

The use of school uniforms, although challenged by some, can bring simplicity to school environment. With one additional point, families can actually save money on school clothes because student will not need as much variety in their daily clothing. School uniforms are a good solution for schools and families alike.

BAD EXAMPLE ONE FIXED:

The use of school uniforms, although challenged by some, can bring simplicity to a school environment. School staff will spend less time on enforcing dress codes and students will spend less time determining what to wear. More time can be spent on school activities. School uniforms are a good solution for schools and families alike.

BAD EXAMPLE TWO:

There are many history teachers in our school. Mr. Jones is a better history teacher than Mr. Smith because he anticipates student questions, he offers extra help, and he is friendly. When you are scheduling for classes next year, be sure to request Mr. Jones.

BAD EXAMPLE TWO FIXED:

There are many history teachers in our school from which to choose. Students who want to request a teacher should give careful consideration to Mr. Jones. He thinks like his students do and often answers their questions before they ask them. He frequently gives up his lunchtime to tutor students. His friendly demeanor makes him easily to like and comfortable to sit in his class. Most of his students say he makes history fun to study. All of his students say they enjoy him as a teacher.

BAD EXAMPLE THREE:

So, as you can see, from the reasons stated above, a new skate park should be built. Kids really want one, and most towns have one if not more skate parks for recreation.

BAD EXAMPLE THREE FIXED:

Finally, a new skate park will bring much more to our town than just another place for recreation. By providing more options for skaters, it will increase physical activity for teens and promote healthy living. It gives teens something constructive to do causing loitering to decrease. Tax payers can take advantage of low construction costs. It may even increase tourism. Building a skate park addresses many social issues that will certainly lead to an improvement of this town.