

Conclusion or Summary Paragraph

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Resource: *The OWL at Purdue* website

- The conclusion or summary paragraph is the final paragraph of the essay, research paper, informative paper, and most all other written material.
- For **creative writing** or **informal papers**, such as personal essays, the last paragraph can be considered the conclusion in which the story, situation, recollection of events, etc., merely ends.
- For **formal papers**, such as essay tests, informative essays, research papers, literature papers, etc., the last paragraph **supports the paper's thesis statement and summarizes the information that is contained in the body** of the paper. The summary is similar to the introductory paragraph except that the summary **also offers the significance of the topic(s)** that were discussed.
- **What conclusions paragraphs do:**
 - Reiterate the thesis statement/sentence
 - Summarize the paper's major points
 - Restate or re-emphasize the significance of the topic(s)
 - Reaches a conclusion that is based on concrete facts
 - States a conclusion as a result of facts and explanation
 - **NOTE:** A writer cannot have a conclusion without evidence (facts) and analysis (explanation).
- **What conclusion paragraphs do not do:**
 - Present new ideas or topics that are not pertinent to or discussed within the paper
 - Sound like an emotional appeal, a political statement, an editorial, a personal challenge or attack, or an inappropriate personal opinion
 - Mention or introduce characters or people who are not discussed in the paper
 - Suggest results that have not been proven with facts
 - Discuss preventative measures or resolutions that are not discussed in the paper
 - Retell all of the details that should have already been discussed in the body of the paper
 - Repeat all of the information that has already been discussed
- **Basic formula:**
 - Restate why the topic is important.
 - Reiterate and review your thesis.
 - Review and summarize the main points. (Your main points should be found in your topic sentences.)
 - You may also want to include a short discussion of more research that should be completed in light of your work, or describe how the "narrowed" topic can apply to the "bigger picture," or, in essence, state the significance for which the reader should want to care about the topic in general.



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- **How to write the summary or conclusion paragraph:**
 - The first sentence (topic sentence) should state the conclusion in which the facts and arguments have been proven to the reader.
 - **Example:** If the paper's assignment required the writer to name three Italian Renaissance artists, two of their main works, and how their art impacted Europe, the topic sentence for the summary paragraph can read: "During the Italian Renaissance period, the artists Da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Rafael contributed important works of art and sculpture to Europe that still affect the region today." The remainder of this paragraph should explain, but in a **summarized format**, why this statement (the conclusion) is true and important.
 - **Example:** For the same question used in the example topic sentence above, the conclusion **briefly explains** important and significant facts about the artist, their associated works, how they and/or their arts affected Europe during the Renaissance, and **how their art affected** the centuries to come. The latter requires the student to come up with some observations of his or her own, such as how the current century views Michelangelo's artistry on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.