

# HOW TO WRITE A CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

## Lesson Objective

In this lesson, you will practice writing a concluding paragraph. You want to leave your reader with a lasting impression, don't you? In your conclusion, you get a chance to sum up your main points and leave your reader with something to think about. Let's start by thinking about memorable experiences from childhood.

## Warm-Up

### A. Writing

Get a blank piece of paper and freewrite for five minutes about a memorable person or experience from your childhood. If you choose a person, choose someone who is not a friend or family member that you are currently in touch with.

1. How old were you in this memory?  
Why do you think your memory was tied to that age?
2. What do you wish you could remember about your childhood?
3. Who is memorable from your childhood (not a family member or close friend)? Why do you think this person sticks out?

### B. Vocabulary Preview

Match these words to their correct definitions.

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. lasting impression | a) to express in a different way   |
| _____ 2. sum up             | b) a feeling or memory that lasts a long time                            |
| _____ 3. in touch           | c) a positive thought  |
| _____ 4. concise            | d) overused  |
| _____ 5. rephrase           | e) to review or summarize at the end                                     |
| _____ 6. fresh              | f) connecting with regularly   |
| _____ 7. high note          | g) as short as possible, keeping to the main point                       |
| _____ 8. come full circle   | h) new and clean, not the same as usual                                  |
| _____ 9. compelling         | i) interesting   |
| _____ 10. cliché            | j) to feel like one is back at the beginning again after a lot of change |

## Elements of a Strong Concluding Paragraph

The main purpose of a conclusion is to remind your reader of what your purpose was and to review your main points. This is tricky, because you do not want to use the exact same wording from your introduction and topic sentences. You need to be a bit creative to write a strong conclusion.

### A. Rephrase Your Thesis

Before you start writing your conclusion, look back at your introductory paragraph. Find your thesis statement and rewrite it in a fresh way. You may need to try a few different times to get it right. Look for synonyms that you can use. Can you change the sentence structure?

### Task 1

Rephrase the following thesis statement:  
The best time to visit New York City is springtime.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### B. Remind Your Reader of Your Main Points

In your conclusion, you need to remind your reader what you told them already. Do this by wrapping up your main points. This does not mean that you should write out each main point separately like you did in your introduction. You need to express how they are all related.

#### Keep in mind...

A concluding paragraph is NOT an opportunity to include new points or evidence. You should keep your conclusion as concise as possible.

### Task 2

Review these main topic sentences and try to rephrase them as one or two sentences for a conclusion.

1. Spring is an affordable time to visit New York City.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Spring is the most comfortable time to tour around NYC.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. There are many things to see and do in New York City in the springtime.  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Elements of a Strong Concluding Paragraph cont.

After the two previous necessities are taken care of, leave your reader with a lasting impression. Here are two techniques that you can use in your conclusion.

### C. Help the Reader Come Full Circle

At the end of an essay, a reader should feel like they've taken a journey. Your essay should have done everything that you set out to do in your thesis.

Give your reader the feeling of coming full circle by using **keywords** related your topic.

If you asked a question or started with a quote in your introduction, find a way to tie it back in at the end.

#### Task 3

Read the following introductory paragraph. What keywords from the introduction *could* be used in the conclusion to remind the reader about how the essay began?

*The great American artist Georgia O'Keefe painted the perfect picture of New York City when she said, "One can't paint New York as it is, but rather as its felt." Everyone should get the chance to experience New York City at least once in a lifetime. New York City has a different feel in every season. The best time to visit the Big Apple is springtime. Spring is an affordable, comfortable, and fun time to experience everything the city has to offer. In comparison to winter and summer, spring is ideal.*

#### Keywords

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

### D. End on a High Note

Just as you started your essay with a hook, you need to close your essay on a high note.

Is there further research that can be done? Is there hope for a better future? What can be said about the topic to leave the reader feeling interested and positive?

Every reader likes a happy ending!

#### Task 4

Read the following unfinished conclusion. Think of a final sentence to include to end this essay on a high note.

*Like so many other artists, author F. Scott Fitzgerald was inspired by the city of New York. "The city seen from the Queensboro Bridge is always the city seen for the first time, in its first wild promise of all the mystery and beauty in the world." New York City is unquestionably one of the top destinations for travelers. While it has beauty and charm to offer in all seasons, there is no better time to experience New York than springtime. As has been noted, you can tour the Big Apple on foot when the weather is comfortable and the markets are open for business. Above all, you can enjoy everything the city has to offer without breaking the bank.*

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#### Note:

These are your own ideas. There are no correct answers. Compare your word choices with a partner's.

## Closing Remarks – Useful Phrases

When ending a speech, many people use statements such as “**in summary,**” “**in conclusion,**” or “**to finish off.**” These markers indicate to the audience that the speech is coming to a close. In writing, these closing remarks may seem a bit weak. In most cases, a reader can plainly see that the writing is coming to an end. You can complete your thoughts without warning the reader that this is your final paragraph. Here are a few useful expressions to use in a conclusion.

### A. Restating

- it has been demonstrated
- as mentioned
- as has been noted
- given that
- granted that
- again
- in short

### B. Emphasizing

- most importantly
- it is clear that
- clearly
- namely
- notably
- the fact that
- above all
- all in all
- indeed
- unquestionably
- the most compelling evidence
- in particular

### C. Wrapping Up

- therefore
- consequently
- hence
- thus
- by all counts
- by and large
- it is no wonder that
- with this in mind
- on the positive side
- provided that
- since
- because
- due to
- accordingly
- all things considered

#### Note:

Some teachers may ask you to use traditional closing remarks in your conclusion, such as “in conclusion,” “in summary,” “in closing,” “finally,” etc. Other teachers will ask you to avoid them as well as other transitional phrases like “as mentioned,” which they may feel to be weak or cliché.



## Leaving a Final Impression

Discuss the following questions with a partner or a small group.

1. What do readers do after they finish reading a piece of text?
2. What makes you decide to share a piece of writing with others?
3. What words can you think of to describe a piece of writing that you enjoyed reading? What words can be used to describe a piece of writing that you didn't enjoy?

### Task 6

Double-check that the conclusion you wrote in **Task 5** will leave a good final impression on your reader. Then share your conclusion with a classmate (or your teacher). Ask your reader to tell you what the essay was about. (They can imagine they've read the whole essay.) Did they enjoy reading it? Will it be memorable? Why or why not?

## Comprehension Check-In

Work with a partner and answer the following questions based on the lesson so far.

1. What is the main goal of a concluding paragraph?
2. What should you do with your thesis statement in your conclusion?
3. Why is it unnecessary to write the phrase "in conclusion" in your concluding paragraph?
4. What did you learn about happy endings?
5. How can you help a reader feel like he has come full circle?

