

Conclusions

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

This tutorial will cover conclusions—why conclusions are important, how to write different kinds of conclusions, and what makes a conclusion particularly effective. The specific areas of focus include:

1. Types of Conclusions

1a. Summary

1b. Expansion

1c. Solution

1d. Looking Forward

2. Writing Effective Conclusions

1. Types of Conclusions

An **essay** is a short piece of writing on a particular subject; therefore, a **conclusion** is typically the last thing in a piece of writing, often the last paragraph of an essay. Conclusions offer closure to your readers, summing up what an essay has taught them.

Since this is the last chance you have to speak to your reader, you want your conclusion to be thorough, well-crafted, and thoughtful. There are a few ways you may craft your conclusion, depending on the goal or purpose of the essay.

You can write conclusions that:

- Summarize
- Expand the discussion
- Offer a solution to the problem
- Predict the future of these issues

If you're writing an **outline**, which is a plan for an essay that's usually written in the form of a list of ideas that summarizes important points that will be made in the essay, it can be helpful to think about which type of

conclusion might best fit the purpose of your essay.

The example below shows an outline without the conclusion filled in. Refer back to it as you learn more about the different types of conclusions.

Intro: The bond between parent and child, how working can take parents away from their kids, why that can be bad.

Thesis: Parents and children both need the chance to spend more time together, so parental leave should be provided for all workers.

Main Point 1: Why parents and children need the chance to spend more time together. For parents, it prevents them from worrying about their children all the time and makes them more productive. For kids, it helps them bond with their parents, makes them safer, and helps develop their brains.

Main Point 2: Parental leave is a necessary policy. Working parents don't get the chance to be with their kids, which is bad for both. Kids and parents suffer emotionally, and distracted parents are unproductive at work.

Conclusion:



TERMS TO KNOW

Essay

A short piece of writing on a particular subject.

Conclusion

Typically, the last thing in a piece of writing; often the last paragraph of an essay.

Outline

A plan for an essay, usually written in the form of a list of ideas that summarize important points that will be made in the essay.

1a. Summary

For a summary conclusion, you summarize the main points the essay has introduced, briefly mentioning each main point and restating the thesis. To avoid seeming repetitious, you shouldn't just repeat yourself verbatim, and instead should summarize what you've previously written in a new way.

This is one of the most basic ways to write a conclusion, but it can be especially useful when the essay itself has been multifaceted, has had many complex parts, or has included dense, complicated information. In that case, summarizing can actually help your readers remember everything that you argued.

Therefore, this type of conclusion is best for longer essays, as summaries of very short essays might just feel redundant if your readers don't need the help remembering.

If you think back to the example outline above, a summarizing conclusion might look like this:

Intro: The bond between parent and child, how working can take parents away from their kids, why that can be bad.

Thesis: Parents and children both need the chance to spend more time together, so parental leave should be provided for all workers.

Main Point 1: Why parents and children need the chance to spend more time together. For parents, it prevents them from worrying about their children all the time and makes them more productive. For kids, it helps them bond with their parents, makes them safer, and helps develop their brains.

Main Point 2: Parental leave is a necessary policy. Working parents don't get the chance to be with their kids, which is bad for both. Kids and parents suffer emotionally, and distracted parents are unproductive at work.

Conclusion: There are many reasons to want children and parents to spend more time together, including bonding for both, relieving parental anxiety, and encouraging childhood development. However, lack of parental leave policies cause many to miss out on this important time. Because of these problems, parental leave should be afforded to all workers.

See how this reflects the **topic sentences**, or sentences expressing the thesis of a paragraph, of each main point?



TERM TO KNOW

Topic Sentence

A sentence expressing the thesis of a paragraph.

1b. Expansion

When you write expansion conclusions, you take the narrow scope of a thesis statement and enlarge it, expanding the topic into new areas of potential interest and making new connections. This could help show how the smaller focus of the essay is related to the big picture or how it's relevant to a broader context.

If you're writing this kind of conclusion, you might bring up questions that still need to be answered, research that still needs to be performed, and ideas that are related to your topic but which you couldn't include due to the space or purpose of this particular writing project.

This can be particularly useful if you want to show how your topic is significant in a bigger way, maybe to the general public or within a particular debate.

For the example outline, an expansion conclusion might look like this:

Intro: The bond between parent and child, how working can take parents away from their kids, why that can be bad.

Thesis: Parents and children both need the chance to spend more time together, so parental leave should be provided for all workers.

Main Point 1: Why parents and children need the chance to spend more time together. For parents, it prevents them from worrying about their children all the time and makes them more productive. For kids, it helps them bond with their parents, makes them safer, and helps develop their brains.

Main Point 2: Parental leave is a necessary policy. Working parents don't get the chance to be with their kids, which is bad for both. Kids and parents suffer emotionally, and distracted parents are unproductive at work.

Conclusion: Parental leave can therefore improve things for children, parents, families, and workplaces. We should therefore explore other ways to create more work-life balance in order to encourage a healthier society. Applying these same concepts to other forms of leave and flexible work time policies may yield new insights that will help us create a more equitable and enriched future.

See how this points to the different directions and other possible connections for this topic?

1c. Solution

If you've discussed a problem in your essay, proposing a solution is a great way to conclude your essay. This is a way of getting your readers fired up to engage with the topic, encouraging action that they can take to solve these problems themselves.

Solution conclusions are particularly useful when your essay has discussed a political or social issue about which your readers can and might care to act.

For the example outline, that might look like this:

Intro: The bond between parent and child, how working can take parents away from their kids, why that can be bad.

Thesis: Parents and children both need the chance to spend more time together, so parental leave should be provided for all workers.

Main Point 1: Why parents and children need the chance to spend more time together. For parents, it prevents them from worrying about their children all the time and makes them more productive. For kids, it helps them bond with their parents, makes them safer, and helps develop their brains.

Main Point 2: Parental leave is a necessary policy. Working parents don't get the chance to be with their kids, which is bad for both. Kids and parents suffer emotionally, and distracted parents are unproductive at work.

Conclusion: You may now be wishing that you had access to parental leave so that you could spend more time with your children. If that's the case, then supporting legislation that promotes parental leave may have a real effect on policy. Advocating for parental leave policies in government or with our elected officials can truly change how future generations raise their children.

See how this points towards steps that you, the reader, could take to encourage these kinds of changes to manifest in the world?

1d. Looking Forward

If your essay discussed a problem or event that will continue into the future, imagining how that issue will look in the future is another conclusion option. This can help to show your readers how your topic is significant or what bigger effects it might have.

By casting the imagination of your readers forward, this kind of conclusion can also help readers gain new perspective on your topic. Thus if you've discussed a problem or controversy, this might be the conclusion for you.

For the example outline, this kind of conclusion might look like this:

Intro: The bond between parent and child, how working can take parents away from their kids, why that can be bad.

Thesis: Parents and children both need the chance to spend more time together, so parental leave should be provided for all workers.

Main Point 1: Why parents and children need the chance to spend more time together. For parents, it prevents them from worrying about their children all the time and makes them more productive. For kids, it helps them bond with their parents, makes them safer, and helps develop their brains.

Main Point 2: Parental leave is a necessary policy. Working parents don't get the chance to be with their kids, which is bad for both. Kids and parents suffer emotionally, and distracted parents are unproductive at work.

Conclusion: So let's imagine what the world will look like in fifty years if we have better parental leave policies. Children will grow up with their parents' attentive engagement and presence, guiding them and supporting them. Parents will spend their time at work secure in the knowledge that they've had sufficient

time to parent. And thus workplaces will be more efficient and productive. Such a small change in our policies can thus have huge ripples through our culture.

Notice how this is a little bit of a science fiction approach. This conclusion looks forward into the future and lets your imagination run, predicting what might come if these changes are made.

2. Writing Effective Conclusions

Now that you've seen some examples of the different kinds of conclusions you can write, it's important to think about how you can make any conclusion the most effective conclusion it can be.

Truly effective conclusions will:

- Do more than just repeat information that the essay presented
- Keep focused on the topic
- Avoid changing the subject or including unrelated information
- Avoid introducing anything to contradict what the paper has presented



TRY IT

Here are three very short sample conclusions. Read them and decide which one you think works best.

Conclusion #1: Parental leave policies are necessary for children and parents. Children and parents deserve time together.

Conclusion #2: What kind of world do you want to live in? Do you want healthy, stable families, or disordered ones? If you want the former, parental leave should be a priority.

Conclusion #3: Unfocused workers cause real damage to our country's economy. Encouraging parental leave will help create a more productive society.

The third one isn't on topic at all. It takes one tiny element of the discussion and focuses solely on that. It's not effectively related to the thesis statement, or even to the overall scope of the argument.

What about the first one? It's not great, but it's also not terrible. The big problem is that it mostly just restates the thesis and doesn't leave the reader with much new information.

The second one, however, is really effective. It uses a compelling narrative approach that looks to the future

and advocates for readers to act. It probably makes you want to read it again. That is how you write an effective conclusion.



SUMMARY

In this tutorial, you learned that a conclusion is the last part of your essay, and choosing the right type is extremely important because it will be your reader's final impression of your work. There are four main **types of conclusions**: conclusions that provide a **summary** of the main points of the essay, conclusions that **expand** on the main ideas, conclusions that offer a **solution** to a problem discussed in the essay, and conclusions that **look forward** to the future of the issue discussed.

No matter which type you choose, **writing an effective conclusion** means doing more than simply restating the points of the essay. Effective conclusions should focus on the topic at hand and avoid bringing in unrelated or contradictory information.

Good luck!

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TERMS TO KNOW

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Outline

A plan for an essay, usually written in the form of a list of ideas that summarize important points that will be made in the essay.

Topic Sentence

A sentence expressing the thesis of a paragraph.