



*Illinois Valley Community College
Writing Center*

WRITING AN ESSAY CONCLUSION

An essay's conclusion is often what readers remember best. Effective conclusions are rarely longer than a paragraph but should be consistent with the rest of your essay. They should “wrap up” your essay and reinforce the thesis of the essay. Often, effective introductions and conclusions echo each other; they may share ideas, examples, or metaphors which tie them together.

Types of effective conclusions:

1. Review your key points or restate your thesis. (However, avoid using the exact words/phrasing already used in your essay.)
2. End the discussion of a problem with a recommended course of action.
3. End with a prediction. Be sure it follows logically from your essay's ideas.
4. End with a relevant quotation. Be sure to explain the quote's relevance to your ideas.
5. End with a thought-provoking question, suggestion, or statement.

Tactics to avoid:

1. Don't repeat the exact words of your thesis and list your main points. This will bore your reader, who already has this information.
2. Don't end with an empty phrase. Clichés like “The more things change, the more they stay the same” are overused and have little impact on a reader.
3. Don't introduce new points or go off in new directions. Your conclusion is not the place to introduce ideas.
4. Don't end with an unnecessary announcement. Avoid phrases like “In the end,” “Just let me say,” or “In conclusion.” Readers will know the last paragraph is your conclusion without an announcement stating so.