**How to Write a Conclusion Paragraph**

Conclusions are often the most difficult part of an essay to write, and many writers feel that they have nothing left to say after having written the paper. A writer needs to keep in mind that the conclusion is often what a reader remembers best. Your conclusion (like your introduction) is the place where your reader should hear your voice the most in the essay.

**A conclusion should…**

* Stress the importance of the thesis statement
* Give the essay a sense of completeness
* Leave a final impression

**A conclusion shouldn’t…**

* Bring in new information
* Make exaggerated claims
* Apologize
* Repeat any part of your paper word for word

**Suggestions**

**Answer the question “So what?”** – Show your readers why this paper is important. Show them that your paper was meaningful and useful.

**Synthesize, don’t summarize –** Don’t simply repeat things that were in your paper. Your reader has already read it once. Show them how the points you made and the support and examples you used were not random but fit together.

**Redirect your readers –** Give your reader something t think about, perhaps a way to use your paper in the real world. If you introduction went from general to specific, make your conclusion go from specific to general. Think globally.

**Create a new meaning –** You don’t have to give new information to create a new meaning. By demonstrating how your ideas work together, you can create a new picture. Often the sum of the paper is worth more than its parts.

**Strategies**

**Echoing the introduction –** Echoing your introduction can be a good strategy if it is meant to bring the reader full circle. If you begin by describing a scenario, you can end with the same scenario as proof that you essay was helpful in creating a new understanding.

**Challenging the reader –** By issuing a challenge to your readers, you are helping them to redirect the information in the paper, and they may apply it to their own lives.

**Looking to the future –** Looking to the future can emphasize the importance of your paper or redirect the reader’s thought process. If may help them apply the new information to their lives or see things more globally.

**Posing Questions –** Posing questions, either to your reader or in general, may help your readers gain a new perspective on the topic, which they may not have held before reading your conclusion. It may also ring your main ideas together to create a new meaning.

**Examples**

|  |
| --- |
| **Using a new quotation or refer back to the opening quotation** |
|  Keeping physically fit, mailing out greeting cards, and filling out applications for technology grants are three very realistic goals for me. Instead of complaining about how I feel or what I don’t have, I’m going to take Maya Angelou’s advice and make some changes. If I keep these promises I’ve made to myself, I know I’ll have a better life and a better attitude. |
| **Make a prediction or recommendation based on the facts or statistics** |
|  Keeping physically fit, mailing out greeting cards, and filling out applications for technology grants are three very realistic goals for me. I don’t plan on being one of the 37 percent who weren’t able to keep their New Year’s resolutions. I intend on keeping these promises that I’ve made to myself. |
| **Complete the anecdote, story, or narrative** |
|  Keeping physically fit, mailing out greeting cards, and filling out application for technology grants are three very important goals for me. Unlike years past, my resolutions are focused and realistic. I intend on keeping these promises that I’ve made to myself. |
| **Make a call to action** |
|  Keeping physically fit, mailing out greeting cards, and filling out application for technology grants are three very important goals for me. Perhaps you also have some goals for the new year in mind. If not, I urge you to sit down and make some today. You will feel better about yourself when you have reached your chosen objectives.  |
| **Continue the description of a character, setting, or object** |
|  Keeping physically fit, mailing out greeting cards, and filling out application for technology grants are three very important goals for me. At the end of this year, after the party is over, and the hats and confetti are colorfully scattered across the floor, I’ll feel good about the plans I made and the promises I was able to keep. |
| **Ask a final rhetorical question** |
|  Keeping physically fit, mailing out greeting cards, and filling out application for technology grants are three very important goals for me. Now that I’ve planned out my resolutions carefully, I know I have a better chance of making them happen. With determination and will power, how can I possibly fail? |
| **Background (summary for response to literature essay)** |
|  Although Melanie is tentative about making new friends in the beginning of the story, by the end she has become more assertive and outgoing. As we see, Melanie’s character develop, we realize that although it may be scary to face big changes in life, overcoming difficult challenges can help us to grow and become stronger in ways that we may never have imagined were possible. |