

## Conclusions

A conclusion, often the most memorable part of a text for readers, consists of the final thoughts with which writers end their writing. Conclusions bring a sense of closure to writing and ideally leave a lasting impression on readers.

Introductions and conclusions often have opposite structures. Writers frequently use general statements to begin introductions, proceed to more specific statements and ultimately end the introduction with the most precise, arguable statement as the thesis statement. This is often referred to as the upside down pyramid method, where the most specific statement, the point of the pyramid, faces the bottom of the page.

In conclusions, however, writers frequently use the opposite structure, proceeding from the most specific, or a reemphasis of the thesis, to more general, broader statements with which to end the writing. The conclusion would end, therefore, with a “right side up” pyramid.

Using these typical structures, introductions and conclusions often resemble two triangles facing each other with the body paragraphs in between.

Introduction    ▽ General to specific  
                    □     Body Paragraphs  
                    □     Body Paragraphs  
                    □     Body Paragraphs

Conclusion     △ Specific to general

Conclusions should leave readers with a sense of completion, bringing to fulfillment the promises made in the introduction and thesis.

Conclusions shows relevance and meaning by answering the “so what?” question. Demonstrating such importance shows how the writing is useful and necessary. In this process, writers often reiterate the thesis, review the main points developed, and bring the piece to a logical end. Such endings may include various approaches:

- issuing a specific call to action
- expanding upon the broader implications of the discussion
- making a prediction
- demonstrating a contradiction or paradox
- using a quotation

Redirection and even new meaning can be achieved. Writers presenting a new idea in the conclusion, however, must be careful to bring their reader strategically to the new point. Without appropriate guidance leading up to the new idea, the unannounced material can appear to be an afterthought or underdeveloped idea that should have been expanded throughout the writing.

Strong conclusions are those that most effectively provide closure to writing with the most memorable impact on readers. A sense of completeness provided in conclusions leaves readers with the sense of a productive exchange, gaining valuable information, insight, or perspective.