

Higher Order Concerns: Introductions and Conclusions

The **introduction** and **conclusion** work together, and one can shape the other. The introduction is the beginning of the essay and it should answer some important questions. The conclusion serves to give the reader closure, summing up the essay's points or providing a final viewpoint about the topic.

Introductions:

As they read your introduction, readers will be wondering, "What is this essay about?" and "Why am I reading it?" So how do you convince readers that they should pay attention to what you have to say? Make sure to explain the situation so the reader can understand the topic and the points you will make.

An interesting way to introduce your idea to the reader is to tell a story (also called an anecdote). This is a rhetorical strategy for hooking readers at the start and for spurring them on at the end. Other ways to "hook" your reader include using quotations, surprising facts, humor, and definitions.

The thesis is also usually placed in the first paragraph, often as the last sentence of the opening paragraph. The thesis is the central assertion of the essay. It must be supported with details and must be written in a complete sentence. The thesis reflects your purpose

Conclusions:

The conclusion will begin with a restatement or review of the thesis idea, properly situated as a reflection of the information provided in the body. Remember, simplicity is best. You don't want to argue a new point that may confuse the reader, only examine your original ideas. The conclusion serves to give the reader closure, summing up the essay's points or providing a final viewpoint about the topic. Clearly review the main points, being careful not to restate them exactly, or briefly describe your opinion about the topic.

Some strategies for writing effective conclusions include making a useful analogy or comparison, suggesting specific actions that the reader should take in light of the information you've provided, or speculating about what your thesis implies for the future.

References:

Greenberg, Karen. *Effective Writing: Choices and Conventions*. 2nd ed. New York: St. Martin's P., 1992.

Packer, Nancy Huddleston, and John Trimpane. *Writing Worth Reading: A Practical Guide*. 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford Books. 1989.

Watt, William W. *An American Rhetoric*. 5th ed. Fort Worth: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 1980.

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