

The following strategies can be used to make your introductions and conclusions stronger.

INTRODUCTIONS:

1. Anecdote/Scenario/Analogy: Use an anecdote or scenario that relates topic to your readers

Example (courage topic): This man was in the Vietnam War, and he admitted that he was terrified every time he had to go into battle. Even so, people consider him one of the most courageous men they have ever known. It is not the absence of fear that defines courage, but the ability of one to force oneself to take action in spite of fear.

Example (superficiality topic): The models that grace the pages of magazines seem to be better than anyone one might ever meet; they seem elegant, untouchable, and perfect. But, just as magazine covers are manipulated to hide imperfections, people, also, sometimes fool themselves into ignoring the flaws of individuals whom they have built up to be perfect beings.

Example (social media topic):

2. Shocking Information: Use a statistic, fact, or statement that is unusual, bizarre, interesting, or shocking that is related to your topic to catch the reader's attention.

Example (good and evil topic): All human beings are capable of the most gruesome crimes imaginable. It is only because of the customs and controls of civilization that we do not become brute savages.

Example (depression topic): On a recent anonymous survey, over ninety percent of high school males admitted to secretly enjoying the music of 'N Sync and to practicing their "hot dance moves."

Note: Again, the fact or statistic would have to relate to the topic you are discussing. It could be a modern-day fact or statistic, or perhaps an interesting fact from Shakespeare's time.

Example (bullying):

3. Quotation: Use a quotation, song lyric, or short poem related to your topic to relate to the reader.

Example (leadership or insecurity topic): "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, which most frightens us." (Nelson Mandela).

Note: This does not necessarily mean a quote from the text. In fact, it is recommended that you save textual evidence for your body paragraphs. Can you think of a famous quote that relates to your topic? How?

CONCLUSIONS:

One or more of the following strategies may help you write an effective conclusion.

1. **Play the “So What” Game.** If you’re stuck and feel like your conclusion isn’t saying anything new or interesting. Whenever you make a statement from your conclusion, say “So what?” or “Why should anybody care?” Then ponder that question and answer it.
2. **Return to the theme or themes in the introduction.** This strategy brings the reader full circle. For example, if you begin by describing a scenario, you can end with the same scenario as proof that your essay is helpful in creating a new understanding.
3. **Synthesize, don’t summarize:** include a brief summary of the paper’s main points, but don’t simply repeat things that were in your paper. Instead, show your reader how the points you made, and the support and examples you used, fit together. Pull it all together.
4. **Include a provocative insight or quotation** from the research or reading you did for your paper.
5. **Propose a course of action, a solution to an issue, or questions for further study.** This can redirect your reader’s thought process and help him/her to apply your info and ideas to his/her own life or to see the broader implications.
6. **Point to broader implications.** For example, if your paper examines Residential Schools or another part of Indigenous history, you could point out its impact on human rights in Canada as a whole. A paper about the style of William Shakespeare could point to his influence on other writers or on later playwrights.

Strategies to Avoid in Conclusions

1. Beginning with an unnecessary, overused phrase such as “in conclusion,” “in summary,” or “in closing”. Although these phrases can work in speeches, they come across as wooden and trite in writing.
2. Introducing a new idea or subtopic in your conclusion.
3. Making sentimental, emotional appeals that are out of character with the rest of an analytical paper.
4. Including evidence (quotations, statistics, etc.) that should be in the body of the paper.