

Conclusions

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Why is the second conclusion more successful than the first? Click on the *i*-icons to find out.

- i** In conclusion, the Black Death killed a lot of people in Europe. It was a huge disaster.
- i** Finally, the Black Death petered out somewhere in Kiev. During its long rampage, between one-third and one-half of the population of Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East died. No natural disaster before or since has caused such devastation of human life over such a large area. It was one of the greatest catastrophes in human history.

—Diana Childress, “Like Black Smoke”



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CLOSE

This conclusion summarizes the history of the Black Death, tells why the information is important, and leaves a strong final impression.

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This conclusion begins with unnecessary words, does not summarize the information, and does not leave readers with a strong final impression.

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A successful conclusion should

- sum up the ideas you have developed
- follow logically from what has gone before
- leave the reader with something to think about

A successful conclusion should not

- introduce new facts, ideas, or arguments
- repeat the introduction
- be a listing of information that was presented
- include words like “in conclusion” or “to summarize”



Conclusions

You can write a satisfying conclusion by using a variety of strategies. Click on the strategy you want to explore.

MENU

- Restate the Main Idea
- Summarize the Major Points
- Issue a Call to Action
- State the Significance
- Ask a Question
- Make a Prediction

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Restate the Main Idea

Restate the main idea to reinforce the topic in the reader's mind.



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Which sentence in this paragraph strengthens the conclusion by restating the main idea?

Dinosaurs ruled the earth for 150 million years, but 65 million years ago their reign ended. Although there are still questions about what caused them to become extinct, it seems clear that changes in climate played a role. The inability of the dinosaurs to adapt to climate change brought about their downfall.

[Click to view the main idea](#)



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This restatement leaves readers with a strong final idea that will be easy to remember.

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This conclusion ends a proposal that contains several recommendations. Where could you add recommendations to this conclusion?

This battle won't be won overnight. It will involve a long campaign to sway public opinion. But if we follow my suggestions, we can and will have safer streets, safer neighborhoods, and, finally, safer lives.



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The specific list of suggestions makes this conclusion stronger and more memorable.

This battle won't be won overnight. It will involve a long campaign to sway public opinion. But if we follow my suggestions—**form a steering committee, run public service advertisements, and lobby the city council**—we can and will have safer streets, safer neighborhoods, and, finally, safer lives.



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Issue a Call to Action

Write a call to action to lend energy to a conclusion, especially in persuasive writing.



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Just this once, look away from the profit margins and mirrors and catwalks and fashion glossies, and give a little thought to the animals. The world is bigger than New York, Paris, and Milan, full of strange and wonderful creatures, and they are not doing “just fine.”

—Matthew Scully, “The Last Gasps of the Fur Trade”



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The call to action reinforces the idea of paying attention to the animals used in the fur trade.

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True to her promise, Susan paid the legal expenses for the three inspectors. With the help of contributions from sympathetic admirers, she paid the costs of her own trial. But she never paid that one-hundred-dollar fine. Susan B. Anthony was a woman of her word as well as a woman of courage.

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In this last statement, the writer powerfully reveals her admiration for Susan B. Anthony, an early fighter for women's rights.

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How might a writer use a question to give this conclusion more impact?

At the end of the movie, Tyler has won back some measure of self-respect. His demons weren't easy to conquer, and he may never be entirely free of them. Nevertheless, he confronted them, beat the odds, and earned a chance for a new start in life.



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The final question encourages readers to make a connection between their lives and Tyler's experiences.

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How would adding a prediction to this conclusion change the impression left on readers?

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CLOSE

The prediction adds elements of hope and determination to the writer's ideas.