

How to Write a Concluding Paragraph for a Persuasive Essay in College

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A persuasive essay, also known as an argumentative essay, is one that requires a student to investigate a topic and argue a viewpoint. College-level persuasive essays generally have three sections that include an introduction in which a thesis or argument is presented, body paragraphs in which arguments and counterarguments are presented, and a conclusion in which the argument is reiterated. The conclusion is an important aspect of a persuasive essay as it is the last impression a writer makes on the reader.

What to Include

The conclusion should include a **brief overview** of what was argued and what evidence was presented without including too many specifics from the body paragraphs. The thesis statement from the first paragraph should be **restated, but reworded**, and reflect the significance or importance of what was argued. A conclusion in an academic essay typically only needs to be one well-developed paragraph of at least five sentences.

New Meaning

No new evidence or arguments should be presented in the conclusion paragraph. However, a writer may choose to **give her argument new meaning** by showing how her ideas and research work together. She can do this by asking questions in the conclusion. For example, if she argued in support of nationalized health care she could ask questions that bring the premise and argument together, by reminding the readers of the evidence presented: Isn't it clear that healthcare is a problem in our country? Should we wait any longer to deal with the escalating costs and lack of access?

Challenge the Reader

College students write persuasive essays in many different types of classes, and their conclusion should reflect the subject matter. For example, if a student writes a political science paper trying to persuade her reader that tougher gun laws are important, she can **ask the reader to sign a petition or join a support group**. In a science or social science class, where further investigation is often warranted, the student can **challenge her reader to study the topic further** by suggesting additional reading or research materials.

Future Outlook

Another way to end a persuasive research paper is by **asking the reader to look to the future**, either real or imagined. For example, a persuasive paper may argue that schools need to do more about bullying. The writer could create a mental picture of a school where all students are treated with respect and appreciated for their differences. This would leave the reader with a lasting impression of what a school without bullies could look like, persuading the reader to agree with the essay's main arguments.