

STRUCTURING CONCLUSIONS

A conclusion is the last paragraph in your paper: It summarizes your argument and extends it to your reader as an idea he or she can use or remember in the future.

Restate your thesis: Explain your thesis again with more detail and more reflection. Convince readers that your paper has provided a new way to understand a problem.

Implications: Answer this question: “So what?” Tell readers why your argument matters.

Limitations: There may be ways in which your argument is limited or open to interpretation. State these possibilities and tell readers why your argument is still important or valid.

Apply your argument: If possible, suggest ways your paper’s implications can be used. What should readers think or do when encountering this topic in the future?

Example Conclusion Paragraph

“On the Death of John Brown” is a fascinating and complicated speech because it is at once obsessed with the injustices of slavery but does not demand an end to its practice. Instead, it calls for an end of associations with its practitioners. William Lloyd Garrison does not want us to impose the rule of God’s justice on the South because he argues that the South, by its very nature, cannot accept that rule. This concept, controversial then and even more so today, is not an easy sell, but Garrison makes it plausible through his deft use of the available means of persuasion.