

Concluding Strategies: Some Guidelines

Selected Devices for Concluding Paragraphs:

1. Use the devices suggested for introductory paragraphs but avoid using the same device in the introduction and conclusion.
2. Summarize the main points of the essay.
3. Call for awareness and/or action. For example, if you are writing a paper supporting the position that sex education be taught in public schools, you might say something like, "Teen pregnancy is growing problem, and, without proper education, the problem will only continue to worsen."
4. Point to the future. For example, if you are writing a paper supporting human cloning, you might say something like, "Provided it is used to benefit society, human cloning could be considered one of the most exciting technological advances of the 21st century."

What to Avoid in Concluding Paragraphs:

1. Don't go off the track. Avoid introducing a new idea or adding a fact that belongs in the body of the essay.
2. Don't reword the introduction. Avoid simply listed the main idea in each topic sentence or restating the thesis. If your introduction and conclusion are interchangeable, you need to revise. To check yourself, read your introductory paragraph(s) and then your concluding paragraph(s). They should not be exactly the same but should make sense when read together.
3. Don't announce what you have done. Avoid statements such as "In this paper I have tried to show the main causes for"
4. Don't make absolute claims. Avoid statements such as "This proves that" Qualify your message with expressions such as "This seems to prove"
5. Don't apologize. Avoid casting doubt on your material by statements such as "Even though I am not an expert" or "I don't know much about this subject, but this is what I think about it."