

Writing Introductions and Conclusions

Writing an Introduction:

Use the questions below to help you think about your writing and put your answers together to form a strong basis for your introduction.

When we meet people in college we generally ask the same questions over and over:

1. What's your name?
2. Where are you from?
3. What's your major/what are you studying?
4. Why did you decide to go to school here?
5. What are you going to be when you graduate?

These questions can be changed into more general questions such as:

1. What's your name?
2. Where are you from?
3. Why are you here now?
4. What made you come here?
5. What are you going to do?

An introduction answers these questions or very similar questions. If you don't know where to start with your introduction, start by answering these questions, then put them together to form your introduction:

1. What's your topic? What is your paper about?
2. Where is your topic from? Where are your sources from?
3. Why is this topic important? What does your reader need to know?
4. Why are you writing about it? Why does your reader need to know about it?
5. What are you going to prove or say about your topic? (This question will be answered by your thesis statement).

Writing a Conclusion:

A conclusion brings your entire paper together. If you are stuck or feel like you have nothing else to say, try thinking about your conclusion in these ways:

A conclusion can...

Answer the “So what?” question:

- Why did your reader just read the paper? Why is your paper meaningful?

Synthesize your ideas:

- Synthesizing is making a “smarter” summary. You can summarize your points, but you need to connect them and show your reader that you made certain points for a reason.

Create a new meaning:

- How can your paper be applied to the real world? What new ideas can come from your paper?

Echo the introduction:

- You can bring the reader full circle by echoing ideas or scenarios brought up in your introduction. However, you can't just repeat what you said in your intro. You need to tie in ideas you brought up in your paper to prove that your paper brings a new understanding to your topic.

Challenge the reader:

- Issue a challenge to your reader. Make them think about your topic and encourage them to be active or interact with your topic in some way.

Look to the future:

- How is your topic going to affect the future? How will it affect your reader's lives?

Pose questions:

- Ask a thoughtful question about your topic. Be careful, though. This question shouldn't be something completely new for your paper. It should be based on what you have talked about in your paper.