

Quiz: Listen to the 'What do I put in a conclusion?' video - Stage 2 Part 2.

As you listen fill in the 10 gaps with the key terms that you hear.

When you have finished you can check your answers against the transcript next to the video.

Hello, I'm Jackie Wills. I've been RL Fellow at Sussex since September 2010. I see up to six students a day with questions about their writing, and I'm often asked 'what do I put in a Conclusion?' So, here's a short guide.

A good conclusion gives a sense of completion..... to your essay. It's where you reflect on the evidence..... you've presented and how it supports the question or title generally. A conclusion should be about 10% of the total word count, although it can be slightly shorter. Sometimes it's tricky to get a conclusion right because this is a much quieter part of your essay than the introduction. It's a bit like winding down a conversation.

It's useful to list some of your options for the conclusion to avoid simply repeating the introduction or summarizing the whole of your essay. Once you've thought about these options go for the strongest. So, you could revisit the question and highlight one or two of your key..... points; or your focus might be on gaps in the evidence research or critical thinking; you could concentrate on the way forward; or speculate about future developments in the debate or in the research you've reviewed; perhaps you could suggest areas where more research is needed and what course that research could take. If you have doubts about the strength of theories and ideas you've been exploring, your conclusion might revisit these areas of confusion and suggest how they might be resolved. If your evidence..... strongly supports your argument....., again you can point..... this out.

You shouldn't put new material in the conclusion. Make sure there are at least some references in the body of your essay to the point you're making, but there might be an issue you didn't elaborate on which provides you with a focus for the conclusion.

One common mistake people make in conclusions is thinking this is where you put your results..... or argument. Your big ideas must go in the introduction..... If, when you read over your conclusion you find you've arrived at some important ideas that you haven't put in the introduction go back and redraft, making sure that you have enough evidence to support them in the body. Another mistake is thinking a conclusion is the place to introduce a personal opinion..... for the first time. It's not. If your opinion is valid it forms part of your argument..... .

So, a conclusion is your chance to leave the reader with a clear idea of what you've made of your research. Make the most of this opportunity to reflect on material you've spent so much time with, so your reader feels part of the process of inquiry and ends your essay satisfied and interested.