

Finalizing the Paper (answers “So what?”)

Writing a summary conclusion

The function of a conclusion is to reiterate thesis and the main points that were made in the paper. Often the summary looks similar to the introduction in that it contains the thesis or questions, the main points, and leads the reader to a summary conclusion. Sometimes the author gives one last thought that resonates with the reader.

As in the introduction, “I” statements should be used carefully. If using the first-person voice adds meaning to the summary, then use it. In most cases, however, your personal experience as a writer is not the focus of the paper and therefore should be reserved for the reflection section, if there is one.

A summary conclusion may define the impact of learning. Given what we know now, what is the expected impact of that learning. What might come about as a result of answering these questions.

A summary conclusion may also end with a new question. Once the author summarizes the main points, this may lead to asking another question. This is evidence of innovative thinking. Innovation happens when we creatively consider new possibilities based on what we know or what we think to be true or accepted as true. Changing perspective, considering another possibility is evidence of innovation. Only then are we truly adding to the collective knowledge and wisdom of our time.