**Introductions and Conclusions**

**Advice1Adapted From *Writing Analytically*, 5th**

**edition**

*"Your introduction takes the reader from a sensory world and submerges him or her into a textual one. And your conclusion returns the reader to his or her non-*

*written reality. Introductions and conclusions mediate - they carry the reader*

*from one way of being to another."*

Students often struggle with how to write their introductions and conclusions. Introductions and

conclusions, however, are some of the most structured paragraphs in your essay. They have to accomplish

specific tasks that you can know in advance. By following some of the advice and steps below, you will

be able to make sure that your introduction or conclusion effectively opens or closes your paper and argument.

**I. Introductions**

A. Remember that your introduction will require you to consider your audience.

 What do they already know about your topic?

 What will you need to establish early on and what can wait to be explained until later in the

paper?

B. Where is your paper going? What kind of tone are you setting?

 The introduction will clarify and set the tone and the direction.

C. If you're not sure what kind of audience you should write for, ask your professor. They will clarify whether you should write for an informed or uniformed audience.

**II. The Structure and Function of Introductions**

*"In academic writing, you don't need a gimmick to engage your readers…You will engage them if you*

*can articulate why your topic matters, doing so in terms of existing thinking in the field."*

A. Four Steps:

1.Define your topic: Why is it important?

2.Discuss how you will approach the topic -

 Will you write about *other* peoples' research?

 Will you discuss an experiment or argument that *you* have originated? Or will you read

and interpret a specific piece of literature or other text? These are not the only options, but they are common.

 Each of these approaches will require you to present a different kind of evidence.

o For example, in an English composition paper, you will probably not reference outside

experiments or statistics.

o However, if you were writing a report on the existence of black holes, you would need

to cite statistical, factual information and experiments to support your argument.

o Each of these papers will have different methods and evidence, so your introduction

needs to set up expectations for how you will explore and support your argument on

your chosen topic

3.Provide necessary background on the topic (appropriate for your audience)

4.State your thesis: a thesis is the idea or argument that your paper will work to prove

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All quotations are taken from *Writing Analytically, 5th edition, Chapter 11.* Copyright, 2009, Cengage Learning.

Authors, David Rosenwasser and Jill Stephen. Advice has been adapted from suggestions in *Writing Analytically.*

**I. The Function of Conclusions**

*"Where does the paper seem to go* after *it ends on paper?"*

A. In many classes and settings your conclusion needs to gesture beyond the paper itself.

 Just as your introduction should have defined your topic and explained its importance,

your conclusion must emphasize the broader impact that your argument should have on the reader.

B. Three main components:

1. Judgment: Make some final evaluation of the facts. 2. Culmination: Tie everything together.

3. Send-off : Gesture towards the broader implications of your argument.

II. Solving Typical Problems in Conclusions

A. Redundancy

1. Many writers will simply rephrase their introduction. You need to assure that your

conclusion *reframes* the main points of your introduction.

 Reference back to the evidence presented in the body of your essay

 Emphasize how you addressed the primary concerns introduced in the

introduction.

B. Coherence

1. Your conclusion must lead from the paragraphs that have preceded it. 2. Avoid introducing new ideas in the conclusion.

C. Lack of Implications

1. Just like your introduction needed to emphasize why your argument was important, your conclusion needs to mention the implications for your argument.

 "An implication is not a totally new point but rather one that follows from the

position you have been analyzing"…"it should have been *anticipated* by the body of

your paper."

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If you need further assistance with this or any other writing issue, visit the Academic Writing Center. More information can be found at our website: uc.edu/awc.