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Your Concluding Paragraph

Traditionally, the concluding paragraph is short, begins with a re-statement of the thesis, and then either summarizes the main points of the essay, issues a call to action, or predicts the future. But what about drawing an actual conclusion? Are you ready for that? Read below.

Rather than simply summarize your essay, your concluding paragraph should try to draw a conclusion based on what you argued. Drawing some philosophical conclusion about humans or the topic would be much better than a summary of the essay. Why is the topic important? What are possible consequences?

Let's assume the assignment was about people who cross gender boundaries by taking jobs dominated by a gender other than their own.

Typical concluding paragraph:

Men, more than women, struggle to cope with non-traditional gender roles. Men have a hard time if among many choices, they decide to become a kindergarten teacher. A man's friends might give him grief about his choice. His family might question his lack of ambition.

There's nothing wrong with that concluding paragraph. But notice how each sentence could have easily been put in a body paragraph. In fact, each sentence just summarizes a body paragraph from the essay.

Let's look at a concluding paragraph that draws a more philosophical conclusion about the same topic.

Concluding paragraph that draws a conclusion:

Men, more than women, struggle to cope with non-traditional gender roles. Society is slow to accept changes, especially when those changes are very personal ones. To its own detriment, society continues to see people in terms of their limitations rather than their possibilities. These kinds of judgments may prevent people from reaching their true potential.

See the difference? They both begin with a reiteration of the thesis. But the second one goes on to draw a conclusion about that argument – that society itself limits people – rather than just summarizing the essay.

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