Conclusions

A conclusion provides the time for readers to reflect on the information they just read. The conclusion not only synthesizes the information contained in the paper but it also provides space for final thoughts, suggestions, and any information that the reader will want or need to take away from the paper.

Below are a few strategies that can lead to effective conclusions. Not all should be used in a conclusion, however. So, make sure only one strategy is used.

**Conclusion Strategies**

**Strategy 1: Call for Action**

Provide a sense of urgency by encouraging--even imploring--readers to act. This can be a powerful and effective way to conclude an argumentative essay.

• **Example:**
  During November and December, approximately 250 16- and 17-year-olds in Laredo were involved in car accidents; this number represents nearly twelve percent of all local 16- and 17-year-old drivers. However, if citizens vote to increase the age for obtaining a driver’s license from 16 to 18, we’ll all see a significant decrease in the rising number of accidents caused by inexperienced teen drivers.

**Strategy 2: Issue a Warning**

To avoid telling the reader what to do, explaining the negative consequences of inaction can be an equally powerful way to conclude.

• **Example:**
  According to Paul Young Auto Mall, a local car dealership, car sales for 16- and 17-year-olds rose thirty percent this year. Unfortunately, the number of fatal car accidents involving these inexperienced drivers also increased. If we continue to ignore this serious and growing problem, our highways and roads can become dangerous for not only these 16- and 17-year-old drivers but also for older, safety-conscious drivers and innocent bystanders.

**Strategy 3: An insightful quote**

The wise words of a relevant authority can effectively conclude a paper. Use a relevant quote that has potential to impact readers.

• **Example:**
  As a state politician was recently quoted in *Texas Monthly*, “I’m all in favor of keeping dangerous weapons out of the hands of fools; let’s start with cars.” Although giving a car to a 16- or 17-year-old may be considered a rite of passage in American society, it is also the parents’ responsibility to consider the safety of other drivers on the road. Parents must realize that handing their teenagers a car can be just as dangerous as handing them a loaded gun.
Conclusions

Refer to ideas or themes mentioned in the introduction as a way to go full circle. This works best when an established theme has been woven throughout the entire essay.

- **Example:**

  **Introduction:**
  The Ramírez family, including a three-month-old child, was killed last night when their minivan was struck head-on by a 16-year-old Mustang driver who received his license just three days earlier. The state legislators’ proposal to raise the age for obtaining a permanent driver’s license from 16 to 18 will reduce the large number of traffic accidents caused by 16- and 17-year-old drivers.

  **Conclusion:**
  Although it is too late for the Ramírez family who lost their lives because of a 16-year-old driver, it is not too late for legislators to do something about our safety on the road. Raising the age for obtaining a driver’s license from 16 to 18 will lead to fewer traffic accidents. The safety of our families should not be jeopardized because 16- and 17-year-olds lack experience behind the wheel.

### An Effective Conclusion Will...

- **Answer the “So What” question:** Show readers why the ideas presented in the essay are important, significant, relevant, etc. This will provide a complete sense of closure for readers.

- **Remind readers of validity:** The conclusion provides the final opportunity to demonstrate how all ideas, claims, evidence, etc. are valid. Take the time to remind the readers why all claims and evidence is appropriate and significant.

- **Create new insights:** A reader should come away from the conclusion with new insights and a desire to read further on the topic.
Conclusions

Things to Avoid when Writing a Conclusion

Don’t announce the conclusion:  
Example: “In conclusion,...”; “To sum up,...”; “As a result,...”; “In this essay, I have proven that...”

Don’t introduce new ideas in the conclusion: Adding extra information to a conclusion that wasn’t addressed earlier can cause confusion.  
Example: Undoubtedly, raising the age to obtain a driver’s license to 18 will decrease traffic accidents. However, raising the age to obtain a driver’s license to 18 will also prove to be a financial benefit for parents, thus proving that the benefits are widespread.

Don’t repeat the thesis word-for-word from the intro: Simply restating the thesis from the introduction doesn’t add anything of substance to the essay.  
Example: Hence, the state legislators’ proposal to raise the age for obtaining a permanent driver’s license from 16 to 18 will reduce the large number of traffic accidents caused by 16- and 17-year-old drivers.

Don’t be overly emotional or sentimental: While an emotional or sentimental conclusion can appeal to some readers and while the feelings may be genuine, it can also come off as artificial and unprofessional.  
Example: The unspeakable horrors that may arise if the age to obtain a driver’s license isn’t raised are vast. A child may become orphaned, their life torn asunder, because his/her parents’ lives were taken by a reckless teenager. The issue will determine if it will even be safe to venture out into the streets anymore, so contact your local representative and encourage him or her to support this age limit increase.