FORMS OF CONCLUSION FOR THE ESSAY

The conclusion of the essay, coming as it does in the most emphatic position, should be used to impress your reader with the importance of your topic and argument.

There are many concluding devices you might use. Whichever you choose, you should keep in mind that it should:

1. Definitely close the thesis and give an impression of finality, a completion of purpose.
2. Leave the reader with a clear understanding of the central idea developed in the essay.
3. Strive to be relevant, clear, and concise.

Various conclusion types are given below:

1. Conclusions that present a final inference

Sometimes a conclusion presents a final inference or judgment based on the data offered in the body of the essay. This variety of conclusion is especially useful when a writer is dealing with a controversial topic, for it produces an air of fairness and objectivity. An example:

Such evidence indicates that the college "honor code" is a failure. Cheating is widespread, and the present system merely serves to penalize the honest student. Clearly, the administration must act promptly to put an end to this intolerable situation. 2. Conclusions that give a striking anecdote

A common variety of conclusion is that which presents a striking example.

By ending with such an example, the author effectively emphasizes the main idea of his essay. Here is such a conclusion:

One final example will illustrate the virulence of this disease. Several years ago, a man in L.A. suffered a violent attack of trichinosis, yet insisted he had been following a meatless diet for several months. After long and careful investigation, medical authorities finally solved the mystery at a lodge picnic. It seems that he had eaten a piece of bread that had been buttered with a knife previously used to slice an infested sausage. In the almost invisible film of pork grease on the knife blade, there had been sufficient trichina cysts to make him acutely ill. Even so, he was a lucky person. Five of his lodge brothers had eaten the sausage, and all of them had died. Trichinosis had struck again. 3. Conclusions that present an analogy

Sometimes an essay ends with a final comparison or analogy. If such an analogy is well chosen, it strongly emphasizes the author's main idea. In addition, the analogy acts as a sort of rhetorical flourish that gives the theme a sense of completeness. An example follows:

In their quest for a chemical that will cure cancer, medical researchers are like botanists who are trying to develop a new weed killer. There are hundreds of chemicals which will completely destroy any weeds on which they are sprayed. Unfortunately, most of those chemicals are equally efficient in killing grass, and they therefore cannot be used to eliminate weeds from a lawn. A good weed killer must be selective, destroying the weeds but leaving the grass unharmed. In similar fashion, an anti-cancer drug must seek out and destroy cancer cells without injuring normal body tissues. Otherwise, the "cure" would be as bad as the disease. So far, no completely successful "weed kill" for cancer has been discovered, but many promising research programs are underway. No one can predict when a scientific breakthrough will occur. But, as one scientist hs said, there is now, for the first time, a scent of ultimate victory in the air. 4. Conclusions that ask a parting question

Sometimes an essay ends with a parting question. Having completed discussion of the subject, the author poses one or more questions which invite the reader to ponder the matter further, and thus to crystallize his or her own thinking. Such a conclusion is most effective when the thesis has dealt with a "problem" subject - for example, highway accidents, crime, defects in

our educational system, unethical business practices, etc. Example:

Obviously, then, the present university disciplinary committee should be replaced by a student court. An overwhelming majority of the student body favors such a change. Why, then, are the administrative officials of the institution reluctant to alter the system? Are they simply indifferent to student opinion? In either case, what can be done to make them realize the seriousness of this problem? These are questions that deserve careful consideration by every member of the student body. 5. Conclusions that state the significance of the subject

When you especially want to convince your readers of your subject's importance, you can end with a paragraph in which you state your reasons for thinking your topic is significant. This type of conclusion could work well for some significant comment on the author/topic of your DCE.

Louis Slottin was not a great or famous man, and he has been in his grave now for almost eight years. Yet his story has seemed worth telling, and not only because nuclear radiation, which kills without being seen or felt, is more terrifying than need be, just because it is so mysterious. It has seemed worth telling also because it is a story of human bravery and sacrifice, qualities which may yet save a civilization threatened with destruction by the very weapons Louis Slottin helped to make.