**2.3: Conclusions (Purdue OWL)**

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**Summary:**

This resource covers writing a detailed conclusion for your GED essay.

**Writing a Developed and Detailed Conclusion**

It is important to have a strong conclusion, since this is the last chance you have to make an impression on your reader. The goal of your conclusion isn’t to introduce any new ideas, but to sum up everything you’ve written. Specifically, your conclusion should accomplish three major goals:

* Restate the main idea of your essay, or your thesis statement
* Summarize the three subpoints of your essay
* Leave the reader with an interesting final impression

The paragraph below is an example conclusion. As you read, think about what each sentence accomplishes within the paragraph. What sentence(s) restates the essay’s thesis statement? What sentence(s) summarizes the essay’s three subpoints? What sentence(s) leaves the reader with an interesting final impression?

Getting a better job is a goal that I would really like to accomplish in the next few years. Finishing school will take me a long way to meeting this goal. To meet my goal, I will also prepare my résumé and search for jobs. My goal may not be an easy one to achieve, but things that are worth doing are often not easy.

Notice that the first sentence restates the thesis. The second and third sentences summarize the essay’s subpoints. Finally, the fourth sentence leaves the reader with an interesting final impression.

No new information is presented in this paragraph. Instead, the writer sums up what has been written so far and leaves the reader with a last thought. While the content of the paragraph is very similar to the introduction, the paragraph itself is not exactly the same. This is important. Even though the goal of the conclusion is to restate a lot of the information from the introduction, it should sound different because the conclusion’s purpose is slightly different from the introduction.

Practice writing a conclusion using the sample essay topic and the thesis statement. Remember to support the points you have gathered. Remember to restate your thesis, summarize your subpoints, and leave the reader with an interesting final impression.

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| **The Benefits of Regular Exercise** |
|      In recent years many people have become increasingly aware of the need for physical fitness. Almost everywhere people turn, whether it is to a newsstand, television or billboard, advice for guarding and improving health bombards them.  Although much of this advice is commercially motivated by those eager to sell vitamins, natural foods and reducing gimmicks,  some of it, especially that advocating a regular exercise program, merits serious attention. Such a program, if it consists of at least thirty minutes three times a week and if a person's physician approves it, provides numerous benefits. Regular exercise releases tension, improves appearance, and increases stamina. |
|      The first of these benefits, the release of tension, is immediate.  Tension builds in the body because of an overaccumulation of adrenaline produced by stress, anxiety, or fear. Doctors agree that performing calisthenics or participating in an active sport such as tennis or volleyball for thirty minutes releases tension. If a person swims, jogs or rides a bicycle for half that time, he or she should sleep better at night and have a better temperament the next day. In addition, after the release of tension, petty irritations and frustrations should be less troubling. For example, an employee upset by the day's work and by traffic congestion may rush home, argue with the family, and eat excessively. Taking about thirty minutes to release frustrations through physical exercise could help him or her to avoid this behavior. Planned physical exercise, therefore, can eliminate, or at least control, tension. |
|      An improved appearance, which is a second benefit of regular exercise, is not as immediately apparent as a better disposition.   Exercise takes perhaps a month or longer to show its results in a trimmer, firmer figure. Improvement, however, will come. A person who is ten pounds overweight, for instance, may be able during this time to burn away most excess fat and to tighten muscles, thereby reshaping the physique. Having improved muscle tone and even posture, he or she will wear clothes more attractively and comfortably. Combined with a sensible diet, an exercise program will also improve a person's skin tone. This improved appearance will provide confidence and favorably impress others.  |
|      In addition to the self-confidence engendered by an improved appearance, increased physical strength produces stamina.  A stronger, healthier body is obviously more capable of working harder and , in fact, of withstanding normal fatigue then a tense, weak one. A worker who exercises should be able to complete a forty-hour week and still retain enough energy for mowing the grass, painting the garage, or cleaning windows .  Similarly, the student who goes to school, keeps house and perhaps works part time should accomplish tasks efficiently. Equally important, this stamina helps to ward off illnesses such as colds and influenza. Altogether, improved endurance is one of the most important benefits of a regular exercise program. |
|      Although easy solutions to the goals of losing weight and achieving an attractive, energetic body saturate the media, actually acquiring these benefits is not easy. The rewards, however, are fully worth the effort of an established exercise program that makes a person feel relaxed, look healthy, and have adequate strength for strenuous as well as routine activities. |

"A dog is man's best friend." That common saying may contain some truth, but dogs are not the only animal friend whose companionship people enjoy. For many people, a cat is their best friend. **Despite what dog lovers may believe, cats make excellent housepets as they are good companions, they are civilized members of the household, and they are easy to care for.**

*In the first place, people enjoy the companionship of cats.* Many cats are affectionate. They will snuggle up and ask to be petted, or scratched under the chin. Who can resist a purring cat? If they're not feeling affectionate, cats are generally quite playful. They love to chase balls and feathers, or just about anything dangling from a string. They especially enjoy playing when their owners are participating in the game. Contrary to popular opinion, cats can be trained. Using rewards and punishments, just like with a dog, a cat can be trained to avoid unwanted behavior or perform tricks. Cats will even fetch!

*In the second place, cats are civilized members of the household.* Unlike dogs, cats do not bark or make other loud noises. Most cats don't even meow very often. They generally lead a quiet existence. Cats also don't often have "accidents." Mother cats train their kittens to use the litter box, and most cats will use it without fail from that time on. Even stray cats usually understand the concept when shown the box and will use it regularly. Cats do have claws, and owners must make provision for this. A tall scratching post in a favorite cat area of the house will often keep the cat content to leave the furniture alone. As a last resort, of course, cats can be declawed.

*Lastly, one of the most attractive features of cats as housepets is their ease of care.* Cats do not have to be walked. They get plenty of exercise in the house as they play, and they do their business in the litter box. Cleaning a litter box is a quick, painless procedure. Cats also take care of their own grooming. Bathing a cat is almost never necessary because under ordinary circumstances cats clean themselves. Cats are more particular about personal cleanliness than people are. In addition, cats can be left home alone for a few hours without fear. Unlike some pets, most cats will not destroy the furnishings when left alone. They are content to go about their usual activities until their owners return.

Cats are low maintenance, civilized companions. People who have small living quarters or less time for pet care should appreciate these characteristics of cats. However, many people who have plenty of space and time still opt to have a cat because they love the cat personality. In many ways, cats are the ideal housepet.

**Which conclusion is more successful? Why?**

**The Hazards of Moviegoing**

**By John Langan
From College Writing Skills with Readings**

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| **Introductory paragraph** **(Thesis)** | I am a movie fanatic. When friends want to know what picture won the Oscar in 1980 or who played the police chief in Jaws, they ask me. My friends, though, have stopped asking me if I want to go out to the movies. The problems in getting to the theater, the theater itself, and the behavior of some patrons are all reasons why I often wait for a movie to show up on TV. |
| **First supporting paragraph** | First of all, just getting to the theater presents difficulties. Leaving a home equipped with a TV and a video recorder isn't an attractive idea on a humid, cold, or rainy night. Even if the weather cooperates, there is still a thirty-minute drive to the theater down a congested highway, followed by the hassle of looking for a parking space. And then there are the lines. After hooking yourself to the end of a human chain, you worry about whether there will be enough tickets, whether you will get seats together, and whether many people will sneak into the line ahead of you. |
| **Second supporting paragraph** | Once you have made it to the box office and gotten your tickets, you are confronted with the problems of the theater itself. If you are in one of the run-down older theaters, you must adjust to the musty smell of seldom-cleaned carpets. Escaped springs lurk in the faded plush or cracked leather seats, and half the seats you sit in seem loose or tilted so that you sit at a strange angle. The newer twin and quad theaters offer their own problems. Sitting in an area only one-quarter the size of a regular theater, moviegoers often have to put up with the sound of the movie next door. This is especially jarring when the other movie involves racing cars or a karate war and you are trying to enjoy a quiet love story. And whether the theater is old or new, it will have floors that seem to be coated with rubber cement. By the end of a movie, shoes almost have to be pried off the floor because they have become sealed to a deadly compound of spilled soda, hardening bubble gum, and crushed Ju-Jubes. |
| **Third supporting paragraph** | Some of the patrons are even more of a problem than the theater itself. Little kids race up and down the aisles, usually in giggling packs. Teenagers try to impress their friends by talking back to the screen, whistling, and making what they consider to be hilarious noises. Adults act as if they were at home in their own living rooms and comment loudly on the ages of the stars or why movies aren't as good anymore. And people of all ages crinkle candy wrappers, stick gum on their seats, and drop popcorn tubs or cups of crushed ice and soda on the floor. They also cough and burp, squirm endlessly in their seats, file out for repeated trips to the rest rooms or concession stand, and elbow you out of the armrest on either side of your seat. |

**Write the CONCLUSION!:**

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| **Concluding paragraph** | After arriving home from the movies one night, I decided that I was not going to be a moviegoer anymore. I was tired of the problems involved in getting to the movies and dealing with the theater itself and some of the patrons. The next day I arranged to have cable TV service installed in my home. I may now see movies a bit later than other people, but I'll be more relaxed watching box office hits in the comfort of my own living room. |

**Compare with the original. How are your techniques different? Which do you like better? Why?**