

## The Conclusion Paragraph

An effective conclusion paragraph succinctly, precisely, and compellingly synthesizes a response's claim with the most convincing pieces of text evidence presented and analyzed in the body paragraphs.

**Claim/Thesis + Most Compelling Text Evidence = Conclusion**

### Do's:

1. Begin with a meaningful transition: Clearly, As a consequence, Consequently, As a result...
2. A conclusion paragraph should be from 2 to 5 sentences long. Any less, and you probably haven't explained your points enough; any more, and you're probably rambling on a bit too much.
3. Find a way to rework the thesis (using different language) in an interesting, sophisticated, and authoritative way, and connect the reworked thesis to the most significant pieces of text evidence.
4. Explain how the overarching theme(s) in the thesis apply universally to all human beings.

### Don'ts:

1. Do NOT quote (unless a quote is the TOPIC of the prompt). Direct quotes belong in the body paragraphs; rather, paraphrasing text evidence in the conclusion demonstrates insightful understanding of the text.
2. Do NOT lead the reader astray with new material (no new ideas or content). Clearly explain how analysis of the text in the body paragraphs leads to a precise, logical conclusion about the TOPIC.
3. Do NOT simply restate or repeat your thesis.
4. It is not necessary to repeat the title(s) and author(s). Titles and authors appear in the thesis, and titles often reappear in the topic sentences (for clarity); your reader hasn't forgotten. Repetition is not a reliable way to improve a response's sophistication or insightful analysis. Also, repetition takes time, which is better spent expressing compelling and substantive concluding ideas about the TOPIC (Note: repetition of the title(s) and author(s) will not add or subtract points from a ELA response's overall score.)

### Argument Essay Conclusion:

**Irony (noun), Ironic (adjective), or Ironically (adverb):**

The use of words and ideas to convey a meaning that is the opposite of their literal meaning. "You are *such* a genius!"

#### Guiding Questions for the Conclusion Paragraph:

1. What was the intended outcome for the family that Kino and Juana hoped for?  
What was the actual ironic outcome?

2. Reread the *Pearl's* epigraph: "If this story is a parable, perhaps everyone takes his own meaning from it and reads his own life into it." What Universal Connection can you make between the ironic and tragic story of the *Pearl* and the life journey of all human beings?

