Conclusions

Just as the introduction should draw the reader into your argument, the conclusion should facilitate the reader’s transition out of your essay back into their daily lives, while leaving them with a strong impression of your subject. The conclusion should:

— Refer the reader back to the thesis
— Synthesize your argument and provide a logical closure
— Provide a sense of unity to the overall paper
— Not introduce new information that has not been discussed in the body but instead, create new meaning or implications that push beyond the confines of the prompt

The conclusion’s content may echo that of the introduction. Its organization should be kept relatively simple. It usually includes a reinforcement of your argument, a reminder of the main components presented in the body paragraphs, and final statements that add to the total quality and impact of the paper. The conclusion is where you have your final say on the topic; it also happens to be what the reader remembers the most. This is the place to consider broader yet relevant questions and explicate the significance of your argument.

Here is an example of a conclusion to a formal analysis of Lynda Benglis’s Zita:

Lynda Benglis’s Zita is a provocative sculpture composed of striking visual contrasts. Through her use of formal qualities of color and materials, as well as through her execution, Benglis brings attention to and challenges societal notions of what a female artist can make. Benglis uses glitter and fleshy colors to conjure feminine imagery, and then destroys those associations with her crude execution and twisting of the tubes. Zita’s palette and tactility create a visually perplexing contrast between pretty and coarse, feminine and masculine. Through Zita, Benglis questions conventional expectations of female artists and the boundaries imposed on their creative output, ultimately challenging all kinds of gender stereotypes.