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## LESSON 14

### WRAPPING IT UP:

### The Basics of Conclusions

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*This sample begins at the end of the lesson.*

Lesson, part 3: For example...

**STOP and take out the handout called, “What Makes a Good Conclusion?” You will also need a green colored pencil or highlighter.**

This handout provides you with four examples of paragraphs written by students like you. Using your colored pencil or highlighter, color both the topic sentences and the concluding sentences in each paragraph. In all of these examples, these will be the first and last sentences.

**Then...**

Referring back to your handout called “Conclusions (2-76),” see if you can determine which type of concluding statement ends each paragraph.

**When you have an answer, keep reading...**

If you said “summary” for all four examples, you are correct. Each concluding statement circles the reader back to the topic sentence by restating the writer’s main idea. This is what all summaries do; they restate ideas in different, more succinct words. But each of the writers in these examples does *more than merely provide a recap of the topic sentence*. Read the topic and concluding sentences again and see if you can figure out what this could be.

**Continue reading the lesson only when you think you know. No looking ahead until you've tried!**

Looking carefully once again at the topic and concluding sentences, you will notice that each writer has restated his or her position *and then taken that position one tiny step farther*. In paragraph 1 we are reminded that the writer has learned several things about computer care *plus* has used that knowledge to teach his or her little sister. In paragraph 2 the writer restates the main idea in words that additionally inform us that he spends time on his bike *because* it's his favorite activity. Sure, we could probably guess that, but the writer chooses to tell us so as a way to summarize and clarify the meaning of the topic sentence. The third paragraph considers what aliens might think if they landed in the writer's neighborhood. At the end we return to this idea, but the writer takes it one step further to recognize that aliens might find learning about *all* of Earth to be a challenge. Finally, paragraph 4's topic sentence initially focuses on some soldiers mentioned in a Vietnam history book that his or her father might have known. At the end the writer chooses to summarize her reading experience, rather than the book itself, by telling the reader something she learned that was unexpected, yet important: a deeper understanding of her own father.

Again, all of the writers used summary statements but took them one step beyond the idea with which they began. As you practice writing concluding statements, see if you can find ways to do this as well. It will not only wrap up your paragraph in a clear, orderly way, it will also give your readers a small extra to take away with them. Remember that one of your primary goals in writing (unless you are writing for personal reasons) is to do something to or for your readers. These small "steps beyond" are one way to accomplish that. A simple summary will insult and bore your readers; it's as if you are saying that they aren't smart enough to remember everything you just said. By summarizing *plus* taking your ideas a "step beyond," however, you are more likely to accomplish your goal of doing something to or for your readers.

## SESSION 2

### Exercises

See the Lesson 14 worksheet and follow the directions.

***End of sample***