So you’ve written your paper and you’re almost finished. The only thing that stands between you and freedom is the dreaded conclusion. Conclusions may seem like either the hardest or the least important part of your essay, but it is a crucial part. Depending on the discipline, size, or audience of the paper, you can use this space to explain why your research is important, where it fits, and areas where people can study further. Or you may want to summarize your paper, in order to solidify all the points you made in the reader’s mind, especially on longer papers. Here are some ideas for what you may want to do to create the best conclusion possible:

**SOLIDIFY INFORMATION**
Remind your reader of the main points by summarizing your argument
- Restate your topic/thesis/claim
  - Be careful not to copy word-for-word
- Use keywords that you used in your paper to spark the reader’s memory

**STAND YOUR GROUND**
Place your research into the conversation and explain why it’s important
- Expose gaps and argue why your research fills those gaps
  - How does your research challenge or contribute to already-existing research?

**CALL FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**
Use your own gaps to explain what happens next
- Recommend further places for people to research this area
  - This can be places that your research created gaps or gaps that existed before your research

**TALK ABOUT OPPOSING VIEWPOINTS**
Is there opposition to your research?
- Talk about what these viewpoints are
- Explain why your readers should side with you

**FOLLOW A (LOOSE) STRUCTURE**
Help the reader come to the end
- Work from specific to general information
  - Your thesis/claims/significance to ideas within larger contexts

**WHAT A CONCLUSION ISN’T**
- Your intro in reverse
  - While you do want to summarize your main points, try not to just restate what you said in your introduction in reverse order
- A place for new ideas
  - Do not bring up any new information that wasn’t already discussed in your paper
- A book report list
  - Use language that does more than just lists information. Similar to when you write a literature review and integrate your ideas into existing research, you want to integrate your ideas into gaps and ideas for further research.