Ideas for Writing Conclusions

The Simple Summary
♦ The writer restates the main points of the essay.
♦ This strategy is effective for long essays dealing in unfamiliar concepts.
♦ This method can seem dull in short essays.

The Pan-to-a-Larger-Landscape Approach
♦ The writer demonstrates how the topic has broad significance.
♦ This strategy reveals the importance of the issue discussed.
♦ Analogy might be a useful tool in this kind of conclusion.
♦ The topic at hand might be tied to a larger philosophic question, political issue, or view of the human condition.
♦ The writer must be careful to make the connection to the original thesis clear.

The Proposal Conclusion
♦ The writer asks readers to do something with a call to action.
♦ This strategy is often used in analyses and arguments.
♦ A similar approach is the “call for further study” approach.

The Scenic or Anecdotal Conclusion
♦ The writer uses a scene or brief story to subtly demonstrate the topic’s significance.
♦ This approach establishes an emotional connection with the reader.
♦ The technique can be as effective in argument as in expressive or open form writing.

The Hook and Return (Framing the Essay)
♦ The writer returns to the essay’s lead or hook device.
♦ If a scene or example grabs the reader’s attention in the beginning, the writer takes the scenario a step further in the conclusion.
♦ This technique unifies the essay--it can seem very polished.

The Delayed Thesis Conclusion
♦ The writer takes an exploratory approach, opening with a question or problem.
♦ The essay deals with a variety of proposals and solutions.
♦ In the conclusion, the writer states the thesis as a discovery.
♦ This approach can be effective for controversial issues because all sides can be examined.
♦ Check with your professor to make sure that this type of conclusion is appropriate for your assignment.

Compiled from The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Writing, John D. Ramage and John C. Bean, eds.