



Summary and conclusion

Conclusions and summaries: typical paragraph starters

Summarising is concerned with expressing the most important facts or ideas about something or someone in a short and clear form.

Concluding is concerned with (a) stating your position or opinion after considering all the information about something, or (b) stating that you have come to the end of something.

Recapitulating is concerned with briefly repeating your main points.

Read these openings of the final paragraphs of academic articles. Note the useful expressions.

As we have seen, the data are consistent across the three separate tests.

To conclude / In conclusion, it seems that women's greater risk of depression is a consequence of gender differences in social roles.

To recapitulate¹ the findings of the present experiments: mothers' speech to young children was simpler than their normal speech.

From these comparisons we may draw the following conclusions. As was expected, there are large differences between Russia and the two Nordic countries (Finland and Sweden).

To sum up / To summarise / In summary², in the case of high achievers in all professions, emotional competence is twice as important as purely mental abilities. In short³, emotional competence is the key.

To bring the paper to a close⁴, I summarise the main points⁵ here: siblings influence the development of behaviour, and problems among siblings are linked to other problems.

¹ a less formal alternative is the short form *to recap* ² (more formal) can also be *in sum* ³ used before describing something in as few words and as directly as possible ⁴ or *bring to an end* ⁵ or *summarise the key points*



Other useful words and expressions for summarising and concluding

We may summarise the findings in a few words: conserving wetlands is an urgent priority. The final point to stress is that pay is rarely the only factor in industrial disputes. To put it briefly / Stated briefly, complex motives contribute to strikes. [*final* is more formal than *last*] Praditsuk (1996) provides/gives a (brief) summary of Asian economic cooperation.

In the abstract of the article, the authors claim to have made a breakthrough in cancer research. [shortened form of an article, book, etc., giving only the most important facts or arguments, usually printed at the beginning of the book or article]

The government only published a précis of the report, not the full report. [/'preisi/ a short form of a text which briefly summarises the important parts]

In this essay, I have attempted to review concisely the arguments in favour of intellectual property rights in relation to the internet. [in academic style it is common to say that you have attempted/tried to argue or demonstrate something instead of directly saying you did it; *concisely* means in a short and clear way, without unnecessary words]

On balance, the overall picture seems to be that the political climate influences corporate strategy. [after thinking about the different facts or opinions; general rather than in particular]

In the final/last analysis, the only safe prediction is that the future is likely to be very different from the present. [said when talking about what is most important or true in a situation]

Don't confuse *lastly* and *at last*. *Lastly* refers to the final point or item in a list or a set of points being discussed, and is similar to *finally*. *At last* refers to something which has been waiting for a long time. Remember *eventually* does NOT mean 'perhaps'. It means 'in the end', 'after a long time' or 'after a lot of effort, problems, etc.'

Exercises

50.1 Look at A. Rewrite each sentence, using the word in brackets.

- 1 To conclude, the tests suggest the drug has no dangerous side effects. (CONCLUSION)
- 2 In short, losing the war was a humiliating defeat for the country on a number of different levels. (SUMMARISE)
- 3 To sum up, it is impossible to blame the disaster on one person alone. (SUMMARY)
- 4 From the survey we can conclude that advertising has a stronger effect on teenage girls than on other groups of the population. (DRAW / COME *give two answers*)
- 5 To recap, there were a number of different reasons why the experiment was less successful than had been hoped. (RECAPITULATE)

50.2 Choose a word from the box to complete each sentence.

abstract analysis balance close eventually points provide put words

- 1 On it would seem that more people are against the proposed law than for it.
- 2 Authors submitting an article for the journal are requested to provide a brief outlining the contents of their article.
- 3 To it briefly, General Pachai's attempts to manipulate the situation to his own advantage led to his own downfall.
- 4 Most theses a summary of the literature in the field in their opening chapter.
- 5 In the final no one can be completely certain as to what caused the crash.
- 6 To summarise the problem in a few : manufacturing in the country has declined drastically in the last ten years.
- 7 Let us now recap the main in the argument.
- 8 Before bringing this paper to a, I should like to suggest some areas requiring further research.

50.3 Choose either *lastly* or *at last* to complete each of these sentences.

- 1 After several months of negotiations, the two sides have reached agreement.
- 2 First, we shall consider the causes of the war, then we shall look at the events of the war and,, we shall discuss the consequences of the war.
- 3 She decided not to apply to Melbourne University. First and foremost, her marks were not likely to be good enough but also her parents did not want her to apply there., none of her friends were considering going there.
- 4 My brother was very relieved when,, he finished writing his dissertation.
- 5 Many congratulations on having reached the final unit of this book

50.4 What can you learn about the difference between the expressions *in the end* and *at the end* from these two sentences? Use a dictionary if necessary.

- 1 In the end, the government realised that the tax law had been a mistake and abolished it.
- 2 At the end of the book, Tao states that privatisation of public services is the solution.

50.5 Correct the six errors in this paragraph.

This paragraph is a preface of *Academic Vocabulary in Use*. To sum, the book provides 50 units covering key aspects of academic vocabulary. Stated brief, each unit has tempted to present and practise the words that all students need. The overalls aim of the book is to help students not only to understand but also to use academic vocabulary. In bringing the book to a closure, we hope we have helped you and wish you success in your future academic studies.