

Narrative Conclusions

The conclusion should leave the reader with a feeling, idea, image, or question.

The Rule of NO The End - “*The End* is for the fairy tales and picture books of our younger years. It is predictable, too easy, and leaves the reader with nothing to ponder. An effective ending to a narrative piece doesn’t need to say *The End*, most readers will simply understand it to be with the way you conclude your writing,” (taken from *Lessons That Change Writers* - Nancie Atwell).

Conclusion Ideas: Experiment with different ways of ending a narrative piece. Here are some *Writing Moves* to consider using...

Echo → the ending circles back to the hook at the beginning of the story. “The end must connect with the opening. What has been promised must have been delivered. Read the opening (*hook*) over again to see what closing it (at the end of your narrative) implies,” Donald Murray.

Pointed Thought or Question → Shifts the pace of the narrative. The author’s real voice emerges and leaves the reader with a thought to consider from their narrative.

A Glimpse into the Future → Jump into another moment in the future that reflects the growth from what you experienced/learned in this narrative

Dialogue on Inner Monologue → End with a conversation or inner monologue that captures a big idea in the narrative

Cliffhanger → A type of narrative conclusion in which the end is curiously abrupt, so that the main characters are left in a difficult situation, without offering any resolution of conflicts.

Epilogue → an ending that then goes onto the future, beyond the story that was just told

Get out your Writer's Workshop Journal

On the next blank page, write down...

Narrative Conclusions

What is an INEFFECTIVE way to end a story?

- "It was all a dream"
- **Cliffhanger** → boring and sudden... "oops, he got away. Well, he escaped."
- Too sudden of an ending, without resolution
- Ending the story the same way they start it → echo
- Someone dies, but not really → DID HE DIE?!?!?!?
- Someone dies, but it doesn't matter... no reflection on what has just happened
- "They all lived happily ever after"
- "The end"
- SURPRISE ENDING that doesn't make sense!!!

- Then everyone dies

- Randomly stops... no conclusion at all
- THE END!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! → rare moments it can work (once in 1,000 times)
 - And then there is a sequel
- I don't like cliffhanger, though some people do like them (especially when I don't get to know)
 - To be continued → promised sequel but it hasn't happened
- Ending in the middle of a conclusion
- Happily ever after
- Random things that were never mentioned
- And then I went home
- Walk away in the sunset

What is an EFFECTIVE way to conclude a story?