



Conclusion

You're nearly done! Good work!

You've probably been told in a lot of other classes that you should expand the view of your paper in your conclusions, giving the reader something new to chew on. This isn't really the best move in philosophy. You can always discuss the implications of what you've argued (e.g. "having shown that it appears we do indeed have duties to animals, we ought to start..."), but don't bring in any new ideas or arguments because then you'll have to defend/argue for them!

So how should you write a conclusion? Put simply, philosophy conclusions are a lot like introductions: another outline of your paper. However, you can obviously use a lot more terminology because you've (hopefully) defined some key terms in the body of your paper (e.g. "coherentism," "utilitarianism," "determinism," etc.). Just tell the reader what it is that you've accomplished over the course of your paper just in case they've already forgotten, which is especially important once you start writing longer papers.

Example:

In conclusion, after having presented the Greatest Happiness Principle, I have shown how this principle is ultimately an unsatisfactory account of what makes an action "good" or "bad." Even though one might object that [insert your objection], I maintain that my criticism holds water because [your response to that objection].

