

Class 5: Writing a great beginning

Slide 1: Welcome

Teacher Notes

- Welcome students to the class.
- Introduce yourself.
- Explain to them that they will be writing their first paragraph of their story today.

Sample script: Hello guys, welcome to our fifth class. Today we will begin to write the beginning of your stories!

Slide 2: Hook your audience

Teacher Notes

- Present the PPT, or have a student read it.
- Explain to the students definition of the word hook.
- Let them know that a great story should be able to catch reader's attention from the first page or even the first sentence!

Sample script: Ok let's get a volunteer to read the slide....

Today I would like you to focus on the word "Hook". As you know a hook is what we catch fish with. In this case, it is what we use to catch the attention of the readers with! Something which makes them immediate decide to want to continue reading the book! This is our focus today!

Slide 3: What Makes A Good Beginning

Teacher Notes

- Go over the slide.

- Explain to the students there are more than one good way to begin a story.
- Have the student think about a good beginning of a story they have read.

Sample Script: Let's have a volunteer read the slide……. Very good.

The goal is to get the reader involved into the story if possible! If the story takes place in a imaginary place, you might need to start describing its setting, reader who enjoy reading fantasy would most likely be interested in your story. Generally speaking if your story takes place in an originary place,or if your story is build around your characters, this is when you might want to get the readers interested or acquainted with that.

You see most books we read are often times recommended by critics, or written by highly recognized authors. Many of these books have slow build ups, which we will read through anyways, knowing it is a highly recommended book.

How many of you have randomly picked out a book from the library? See, this is the issue. When a random person picks up a book from a pile of books written by unknown authors. He might only have less than a minute to decide whether he wants to put it down to keep reading it.

Therefore many stories begin with the highlight of the story in an attempt to grab reader's attention. For example, "The lives of thousands flashed right before me", or "That was the first and only time my dad put his hands on me".

Not every story has to start with "Once upon a time……" think outside the box!

Slide 4: Introduce the main character

Teacher Notes

- Go over the slide to explain the term "Show not tell".
- Give examples if possible.
- Explain to the student that is how to differentiate between a good story and a regular/bad story. .

Sample Script: Introducing your character in a fun way is most important! Does anyone know the term "Show, not tell?".

What exactly is the difference? Show means to be descriptive about a fact, offer details about an emotion etc… For example here, instead of saying Tom is a boy. You can say Tom always ran anywhere- even when he wasn't late, or instead of saying Tom is short. You can say, at the age of twelve, Tom still sat in the front row of the class alongside the shortest girls. You want to help people create an image in their mind about your story.

Slide 5: Set the Scene

Teacher Notes

- Go over the slide.
- Go over ways to begin a story introducing the setting.
- Have the students write a sentence or two describing the setting of their story.

Sample Script: Ok, so now for the setting. A popular way to begin a story is go right into the setting. And just like show, not tell. You want to give additional details instead of just mentioning the location. Lets take look at the examples, for the first one instead of just saying in the school hallway, we added the smell of wet raincoats which indirectly shows that its raining outside right? It's often a good idea to add a sense to describe your setting. Let's quickly go over the second example, any volunteers? Which sense did they add to the forest? Sound, right? It's quiet…. How quiet?? Maya could hear her own heartbeat.
Let's write a sentence or two on the setting of your own story. Try to add a sense or two when applicable.

Slide 6: Hooks that pulls readers in

Teacher Notes

- Go over the slide.
- Explain to the students about the third method authors use to get reader's early attention.

Sample Script: Ok, we have gone over the character and the setting, now a third method we use to start our story is a direct hook or a mention of the climax to pull readers in! Let's get a volunteer to go over the slide.

Slide 7: Examples Of Strong Beginnings (Work Sheet)

Teacher Notes

- Quickly go over the examples on the slide.
- Ask students which of the 2 examples they prefer, and then explain to them they are both good but just written in different styles.
- Have students work on the first half of the worksheet, coming up with a few hooks for their stories.

Sample Script: Let's take a look at these 2 examples. If these were the frist sentence of a book, which one would you choose to read? Think about the kind of hook you would like to use for your story. Think about whether you want to start with the character, settings, or a hook of your choice. I'll give you guys 5 min to create 3 possible hooks for your story. Go!

Slide 8: Write your beginning

Teacher Notes:

- Remind the students to include a mix of the 4 things mentioned on the slide. (Pick at least 2 out of the 4.
- Remind the students to apply the things we have done in the previous classes to assist them with it.
- Have the students begin creating their first paragraph. Remind them to consider the length of the complete story to decide exactly how detailed and descriptive they want this to be!

Sample Script: Ok guys, we are now going to start writing our story. Use previous worksheets and notes to assist you with this! Now for the first paragraph, consider applying at least 2 of the 4 things listed on the slide! Take your time to decide the kind of story it is, where the focus lie? Is it a funny story? Is it a thriller? And then set the tone and setting based on that! Let's do this!

Slide 9: Share and Feedback

Teacher Notes:

- Invite students to share their first paragraphs.
- Ask the other student to say what they liked about it, and if there are questions to support they can offer to make it better!
- Make sure to be nice to one another.

Sample Script: Ok everyone, pass your worksheet to the person next to you!
Take 2 min to go over it! See if you like their story. Share what you liked about it, and offer suggestions to make it better if you have any. Be supportive and kind to one another!

Slide 10: Homework

Teacher Notes:

- Go over the homework.
- Make sure to bring it to the next class!

Sample Script: For homework people, finish the beginning of the story! Make sure to go over the tips so you don't forget anything. Strongly recommend that you retype your story from your worksheet onto your computer, and continue writing if applicable! Remember to bring it to our next class!