

Grown Up's Guide: HOOK YOUR READER

#5

Now that your child has brainstormed their character and setting, as well as some of the events for their story, they are ready to begin writing their story. It is important to guide students writing- especially at the beginning stage of their stories - so that students aren't simply stating what happens in the story. For example, we want to avoid a list of events: "This happened, and then this happened, and then..." Instead, we want to learn about the character, where they are and what it's like to be there. You may choose to start with the attached handout, where your child can brainstorm their story beginning.

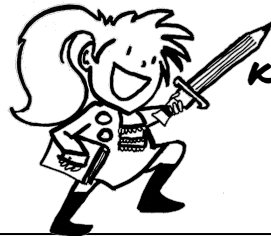


GETTING STARTED

Every story should start with a BIG ACTION sentence, something that the character is doing in the setting they are in. For example, "Fred was fearlessly running across the red sandy mountains on Mars searching for signs of life." This action sentence acts as the 'hook' to grab the reader's attention. You can read a variety of our student stories to get an idea of what the first sentence in a story could be.

<https://www.storiystudio.ca/yourstories/>

Will was swimming faster than he had ever before. He was a blue whale and he was nine years old. He was very fast and a quick thinker. Will was always excited to learn new things in the ocean.
(from 'Will the Whale' by Lucas)



KEY QUESTIONS

1. What big action is your character doing at the start of your story?
2. Who is your character and where are they?
3. How does your character feel to be there?

Once readers are 'hooked in' with the action sentence, have your child stop, or take a break in the action, to introduce their character and where they are, or how they got there. Remind them to look at their character and setting descriptions from earlier StorySheets - how can those details can be added into their story? Use the key questions below to help guide your child in writing the introduction to their story.

Once your child has introduced their character and setting, they can continue with the events of their story that they created in their story map, developing their problem and then adding in suspense (as outlined in the next Guide.) As your child writes, remind them not to worry about the spelling and grammar, but rather focus on their ideas and the details of their story. Editing and revising can come later in their story writing. Right now, the focus should remain on their creative ideas.

SENTENCE STRETCH ACTIVITY

This activity is especially useful to early elementary age children in order to add more information to their sentences and make them more interesting. Start by sharing a very simple sentence such as, "The boy ran." To stretch out the sentence, have your child think about the *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* that could be included to add more details. You may wish to share a list of adjectives, or describing words with them, or read through the ones provided on the '[Details Matter](#)' StorySheet. Explain that by including more of these words we can learn more about our characters and events. This can all be done by following along on the StorySheet, where there is an example, as well as one for your child to complete independently. After completing the activity, look back through your child's story with them, and find one simple sentence to stretch.

StorySheet: HOOK YOUR READER

5

Now that you have thought through all the parts of your story, you are ready to put them together. You want to write an exciting story that your readers will enjoy. To do that, you want to go fishing and hook them from the very first sentence – don't let your reader swim on by! Start with a big action to get your readers excited. Then you can describe who your character is and where they are.



storystudio.ca



Remember, adding details and descriptions will help to keep your reader hooked!



FIRST SENTENCE:

Think of a BIG ACTION sentence. Something exciting your character is doing at the start of your story:

PAUSE: Describe who your character is. Use your setting descriptions to introduce where your character is:

Stretch your sentences to add more details:

The boy ran.

Think about **where, how, or why** the boy was running:

The little boy ran as fast as his legs would take him, rushing through the forest and away from the giant bear.

Give it a try. Try and stretch the following sentence:

The boy ate.

Write **where, how,** and **why:**

Date:

Name: