

Openings and Endings Toolkit – Progression Document

Purpose: to create openings and endings to engage the reader.

Reception	Year 1 and 2 As in Reception plus:	Year 3 and 4 As in Year 1 and 2 plus:	Year 5 and 6 As in Year 3 and 4 plus:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn a <i>Once upon a time</i> opening. • Learn <i>Once upon a time, there was a ... who lived...</i> to establish a character in a setting e.g. <i>Once upon a time, there was a pirate who lived on an island.</i> • Get the story going with <i>One day...</i> • Take you character home at the end of the story. • Learn to end a story with <i>Finally</i> or <i>In the end</i> • Learn to use <i>happily ever after</i>. • Orally practise saying sentences which begin with <i>first, next, after</i> and <i>finally</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about how the character feels/ what the character wants before the story starts. • Use different ways to start a story <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use time starters – <i>There once was... Once, not twice,... Long ago... Many moons ago,...</i> - Use place starters – <i>IN a distant land,... Far, far away,... On the other side of the mountain,...</i> • Develop the ways to get a story going using a time starter – <i>One day,... One morning,... One afternoon,... One night,...</i> • Add in early or late to the time starter – <i>Late one night,... Early one morning,...</i> • Develop ways to show the story is ending- <i>In the end,... Just in the nick of time,...</i> • End by stating how the character has changed or what has been learned – <i>He would never steal again.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use time - <i>Late one night,...</i>; weather – <i>Snow fell...;</i> or place starters – <i>The river teemed with fish</i> plus <i>who, where, when</i> or <i>what</i> is happening to orientate the reader. • Start with the name of your character – <i>Bob stared out of the window.</i> • Think about how the character feels (or their personality) and show this at the start – <i>Bill glared at his teacher.</i> • Use dramatic speech – <i>“How do we escape now?”</i> (Try warnings, worries, dares, secrets.) • Start with questions or exclamations to hook the reader’s interest – <i>“Run!” they yelled. “What is it?” she muttered.</i> • End by showing how the character has changed or what has been learned – a moral. • Write a sentence which contains an ‘if’ phrase – <i>If the alarm had gone off, then his life would not have been destroyed.</i> • Write sentences beginning with subordinate clauses – <i>While driving along the country lanes,...</i> <i>Although he felt nervous,...</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Hook’ the reader: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Usually, Tim enjoyed playing in the park but...</i> - Use a contrast – inside/ outside <i>Outside, the wind howled. Inside, the fire blazed.</i> - Use a dilemma, desire or unexpected event – <i>Jo wept.</i> - Suggest something dangerous might be about to happen – <i>The ancient bridge shook</i> – or has happened – <i>Smoke rose from the village.</i> - Dismiss the ‘monster’/ problem – <i>Tim had never believed in ghosts.</i> - Create a mood – <i>Fog shrouded...</i> - Use a ‘trigger’ to catch the reader’s interest – someone wants something; is warned not to do something; has to go somewhere; is threatened; loses something; finds something. • Use a flashback or forwards. • End the story on a cliffhanger or by setting up a sequel – <i>The journey was over, for now.</i> • End with an author’s comment on the events – <i>And fro that day onwards, Tim never looked at the graveyard the same way.</i> • Use an If, if, if, then sentence.

Useful ideas for teaching openings and endings – always co-construct the toolkit with the class.

Reception	Year 1 and 2 As in Reception plus:	Year 3 and 4 As in Year 1 and 2 plus:	Year 5 and 6 As in Year 3 and 4 plus:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice and use common openings and endings from well-loved picture books. • Practise openings/ endings such as <i>Once upon a time,...</i> or <i>Finally, they...</i> in sentences using 5 sentence stories – <i>Once upon a time,...</i> <i>One day,...</i> <i>Unfortunately,...</i> <i>Luckily,...</i> <i>Finally,...</i> • Emphasise, in storytelling, the importance of the main character and where they lived as the was to start a story. • Use characters and settings to develop familiar opening patterns such as – <i>Once upon a time, there was a ... who lived...</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hot seat, in role, as a main character at the start of the story – what do they feel/ desire, where do they live/ where are they going/ what are they doing – then turn into oral telling of the opening or shared writing. • Repeat hot seating of the main character to develop the ending, focussing on how the character has changed or what has been learned. • Notice, collect and try using openings from picture books and oral stories. • Build up a bank of cards with time starters, characters, settings so they can choose different ways to open/ end stories. • Use objects pictures, film clips, visitors etc. to trigger story beginnings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use drama to develop how a character is feelings and how we can show this through their actions and reactions to deepen openings and endings (show, not tell). • Use role play to develop possible speech openings and translate with shared writing. • Collect and categorise openings from story books – ones that start with speech, a character’s name, the setting, a questions, a dilemma etc. • Discuss which openings hook the reader and what techniques are being used. • Work on planning with a character, in a place, the time of day and weather. Then add in why the character is there and how the character feels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect adverbial to hook the reader – <i>Usually, ... Amazingly, ... Suddenly, ...</i> • Work from objects, images and experiences. • Model how to tease the reader by leaving gaps and a back-story – <i>Mrs Jenkins was not going to be fooled again.</i> • Compare different openings/ endings by quality writers and discuss which is most powerful and why. Then contrast the openings with their endings/ look for links. • Use shared and guided writing to model effective openings that hook the reader, and endings that draw a story together. Reflect what has changed/ been learned. • Experiment by writing various openings, thinking about the desired effect on the reader – to make them laugh, feel sad, want to read on tc.