

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.3.A

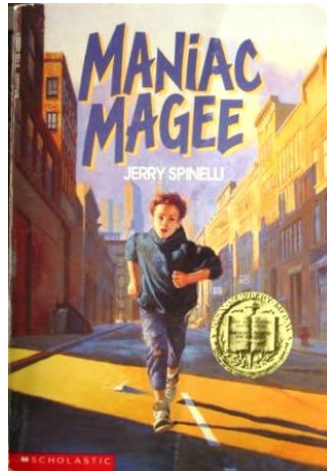
Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.

I can write an engaging lead that gives shape to the meaning of my piece by setting the tone, message and capturing my reader's interest and heart. The engaging beginning captures the reader's interest, inviting the reader to dive headfirst into the text.

1. Ask, What is my story really, really about? What am I reaching toward in my story?
2. Think. How can I start my story that will immediately "hook" my reader?
3. Write it down!

Connection

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They say Maniac Magee was born in a dump. They say his stomach was a cereal box and his heart a sofa spring. They say he kept an eight-inch cockroach on a leash and that rats stood guard over him while he slept. They say if you knew he was coming and you sprinkled salt on the ground and he ran over it, within two or three blocks, he would be as slow as everybody else. They say...

* **Shocking Statement:** Something Surprising or Out of the Ordinary--this is just one engaging way writers begin their stories. There are many more. Just by reading the intro, we get a strong feeling that this story is going to be about someone who was different, whom people talk about but whom they may not really know at all.

Teach

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Squish thunk, squish thunk, went out boots as we trudged down the back road of the ranch. There had been a storm the night before and as my brother, sister, and I went for a walk, we were enjoying the crisp spring air and the sunshine putting its warming hands on our backs. As we approached the corral, we noticed a mud puddle, a particularly marvelous mud puddle where the rain had mixed with water, mud, and cow dung that had been there before the storm. Little did I know that I was about to be involved in the mud fight of a lifetime.

Onomatopoeia: A Sound Associated with an Action

So let's assess what I did. What steps did I take to write a lead that hooks my reader? What may be the message of my piece?



1. Ask, What is my story really, really about? What was I reaching toward?
2. I think, How can I end the story to show what the story was really about?
3. Write it down!

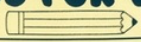
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Other ways to begin my narrative:

What Makes An Effective Lead?

- Start with a **question**. This will get your reader thinking about your piece right from the beginning.
- Start with **dialogue**. Choosing an interesting dialogue sentence builds your character from the very beginning.
- Start with an **interesting fact**. Tell the reader something they don't already know, and make them want to learn more from you.
- Start with a **strong opinion or feeling**. Let your reader know where you stand right away.
- Start with **single word or sound effect**. This creates a dramatic effect that makes your reader want to find out what the sound is, or why the word is important.
- Start at the **end**. Your reader will want to find out what happened to get you to that place.
- Start with a **quote**. Beginning with a famous quote will make your reader want to know how your piece of writing relates to the quote.

OPENINGS FOR WRITING



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| <p>OPEN WITH DIALOGUE: Start a conversation between two characters.</p> | <p>OPEN BY DESCRIBING A CHARACTER OR SETTING: Begin your writing using descriptive words to describe the character or setting.</p> | <p>OPEN WITH A QUESTION: Ask the reader a question.</p> |
| <p>OPEN WITH A QUOTATION: Quote a person at the beginning of your writing.</p> |  | <p>OPEN WITH A RIDDLE OR HUMOR: Begin with a joke or something funny that happened about what you are writing about.</p> |
| <p>OPEN WITH A SOUND: Use an onomatopoeia to begin your writing.</p> | | <p>OPEN WITH A BOLD STATEMENT OR FACT: Surprise the reader with a true statement.</p> |
| <p>OPEN WITH HOW YOU FELT OR WITH A FEELING: Tell the reader some of your emotions about how you are feeling about your topic.</p> | <p>OPEN WITH A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE: Begin by telling your reader about some of the experiences you had about your topic.</p> | |

Teacher's Take-Out

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* Dialogue: A Character or Characters Speaking

“Scott! Get down here on the double!” Dad bellowed. His voice sounded far away.

“Dad?” I hollered. “Where are you?” I squinted through the screen door but couldn’t see him.

“I’m down on the dock. MOVE IT. You’re not going to believe this,” he replied.

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More specific examples:

*** Reaction: A Character Thinking**

I couldn't imagine why my father was hollering for me at 7:00 in the morning. I thought fast about what I might have done to get him so riled. Had he found out about the way I talked to my mother the night before, when we got to camp and she asked me to help unpack the car? Did he discover the fishing reel I broke last week? Before I could consider a third possibility, Dad's voice shattered my thoughts.

"Scott! Move it! You're not going to believe this!"

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Active Engagement

- Remind yourself what your story is really about. What were you wanting or struggling with in your story?
- How might you revise your lead to show the heart of your story and engage your reader?
- Turn and talk to your partner.

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Techniques for Raising the Level of Narrative Writing

- Dream the dream of the story and then write in a way that allows readers to experience the moment along with you.
- Revise using all you know about storytelling, not summarizing.
- Use all you know about grammar, spelling, and punctuation to edit as you write.
- Tell the story from **inside** it.
- Use details that are true to the event and ring true.
- Use tools like the Narrative Writing Checklist to ask, "In what ways does my writing measure up? In what ways do I need to improve?" Then, revise your work to make it stronger.
- Ask: "What is my story really about?" and then write to show that meaning.
- Bring out the story structure.
- Elaborate on important parts. Parts that relate to what your story is really about.
- Incorporate scenes from the past or future to highlight the significance of your story.
- **Don't simply end stories! Resolve problems, teach lessons, or make changes that tie back to the big meaning of our story.**

Link

Turn to a partner. List two or three other things you might do to revise today.

When you are working today, you can work on any number of revision strategies we have learned.

Share

I **can** write an engaging lead that gives shape to the meaning of my piece by setting the tone, message and capturing my reader's interest and heart.

You are each going to have a chance to share a few lines from your lead. Read it over now in your head and prepare for how you will read it. You will want to use your best storytelling voices.

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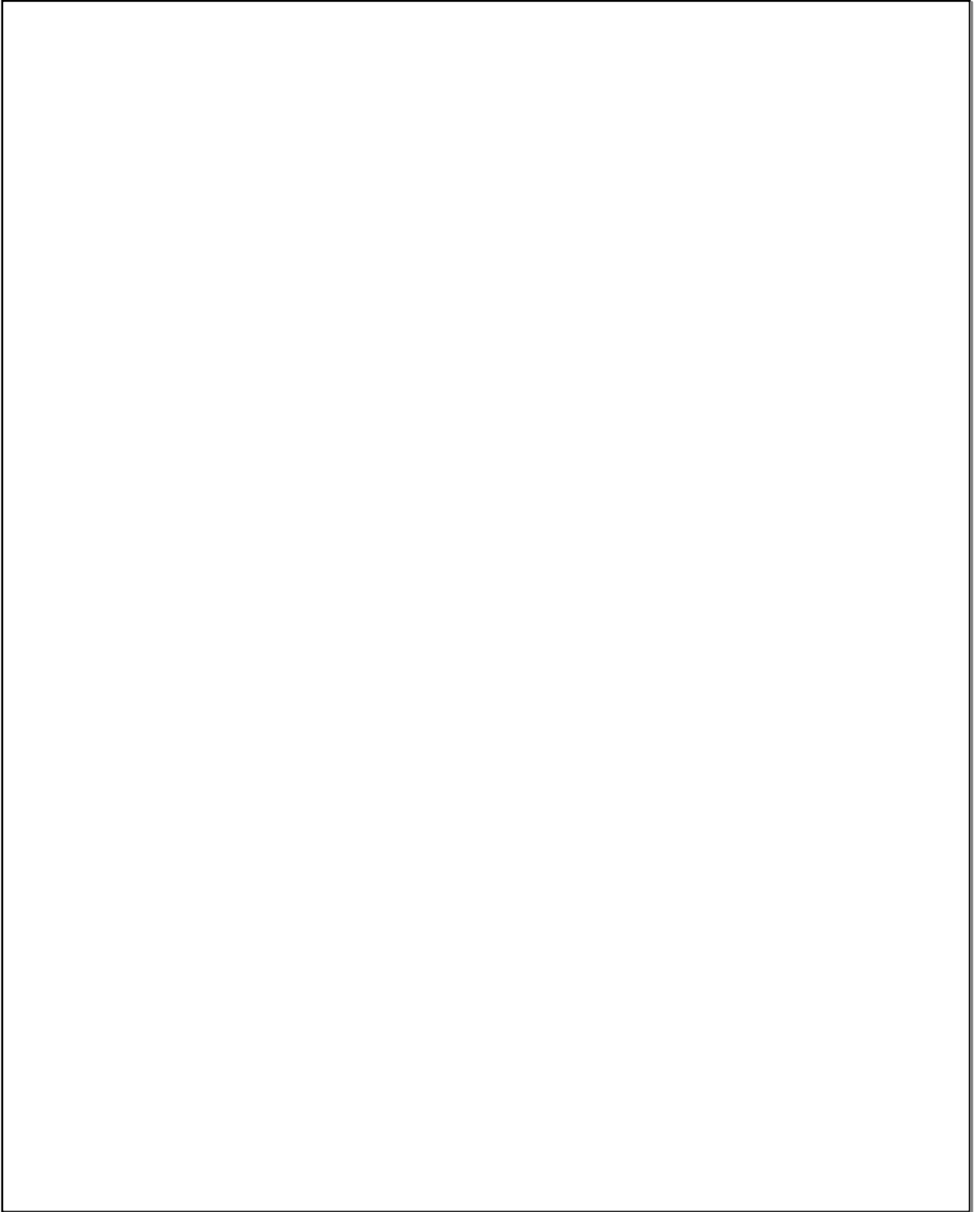
Homework

Tonight, try out a different lead for your story, even if your lead feels just right. Also, spend some time thinking about your lead.

- Does it set readers up to understand what is going to be most important in your story?
- Does it grab your reader's attention and begin right at the start of the action?
- I'm sending you home with a copy of our chart, "Strategies for Elaborating on Important Parts."

Strategies for Elaborating on Important Parts

- Slow down the action, telling it bit-by-bit
- Add dialogue
- Give details
- Show small actions
- Add internal thinking



Teacher Page

Differentiation: Have students that are struggling to go back to the problem in the story and make sure that the problem is resolved at the end.

Conferring and Small Group Work: Meet with struggling writers to discuss how endings tie up beginnings. Meet with higher level writers to talk about how endings can mirror beginnings.

ENLs: Have students act out their endings.

Assessment:

Self-Have students use the class created checklist to assess their success during active engagement, midworkshop interruption, and share.

Teacher-conferring, collect a table's notebooks for reading, and listen to student's partner conversations.

Provide strategy sheets detailing today's steps to those students who need further support organizing their notebooks.