

Lesson Thirteen

Lead Examples

- Direct statement- This will basically say exactly what the story is about.
 - "Not every thirteen-year-old girl is accused of murder, brought to trial, and found guilty. But I was just such a girl, and my story is worth relating even if it did happen years ago." (*The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*, by Avi)
- Anecdote- A brief story that reveals what the story is going to be about (should relate to what you want your reader to take with them about your story)
- Quotation- Often a quotation from someone in the story is an effective lead.
 - Ex-"Where's Papa going with that ax?" said Fern to her mother as they were setting the table for breakfast." (from *Charlotte's Web* by EB White)
- Informing detail- A specific bit of information that will intrigue the reader, make them want to learn more.
 - "It was one of those super-duper-cold Saturdays. One of those days that when you breathed out your breath kind of hung frozen in the air like a hunk of smoke and you could walk along and look exactly like a train blowing out big, fat, white puffs of smoke. It was so cold that if you were stupid enough to go outside your eyes would automatically blink a thousand times all by themselves, probably so the juice inside of them wouldn't freeze up. It was so cold that if you spit, the slob would be an ice cube before it hit the ground. It was about a zillion degrees below zero." (from *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*, by Christopher Paul Curtis)
- Description- A description of a place or a process that is central to the story.
 - "There is no lake at Camp Green Lake. There once was a very large lake here, the largest in Texas. That was over a hundred years ago. Now it is just a dry, flat wasteland. There used to be a town of Green Lake as well. The town shriveled and dried up along with the lake, and the people who lived there. During the summer the daytime temperature hovers around ninety-five degrees in the shade-if you can find any shade. There's not much shade in a big dry lake. The only trees are two old oaks on the eastern edge of the "lake". A hammock is stretched between the two trees, and a log cabin stands between that. The campers are forbidden to lie in the hammock. It belongs to the Warden. The Warden owns the shade. Out on the lake, rattlesnakes and scorpions find shade under rocks and in the holes dug by the campers." (from *Holes*, by Louis Sachar)
- Face- Introduce a character from the story
 - "There was a boy named Milo who didn't know what to do with himself – not just sometimes, but always." (from *The Phantom Tollbooth*, by Norton Juster)
 - "Mr. and Mrs. Dursley of four, Privet Drive, were proud to say that they were perfectly normal, thank you very much." (from *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, by JK Rowling)
- Tension- reveal the sources of the problem as they collide with each other.