



# OPENINGS

## *Year 6 Lesson Plan 4*

*This lesson will look at what makes a good opening.  
You need to engage the reader/audience and make them want to know more.*



Can you put the speech punctuation in these sentences:

- Get out screamed the girl.
- He whispered be quiet, as they strolled into the cinema.
- What do you think you're doing the teacher asked the boy

Go over your answers.

# Dialogue

What are the rules for writing dialogue?

As a class, punctuate the following paragraph correctly.

Get out of the way yelled the boy, as he whizzed into the crowd on his scooter. What do you think you're doing, yelled an elderly man, as he jumped out of the way. The brakes have gone, screamed the boy.

Oh no, yelled a young girl, as the boy toppled over.

Are you ok, asked a young woman.



Last lesson you planned your stories.

- Did you complete your planning sheet?
- Did you include all parts of the story mountain?
- Are there any words or phrases you'd like to include?
- Check your plan to see whether you'd like to add/ take anything out.
- Remember you must include the person and the dog in your story.

## What makes a good opening?

It leaves the reader/audience asking questions and wanting to find out more.



Read these openings and decide which your favourite is?

Vote as a class

### Example Opening 1:

It was a bright, frosty morning. The pavement glistened like a carpet of crushed diamonds in the early morning sunshine I couldn't believe a word he told me any more and why had he brought me here?

Wrapped up warm against the icy fingers of dusk, the caretaker closed the cemetery gates, who was that watching him?

Bleary-eyed, I went downstairs for breakfast, the house was empty, even the furniture had gone. "Janjay!" called the elderly man, "wait, I didn't mean what I said."

### Example Opening 2:

The air turned black all around me. A shrill cry echoed in the mist. Footsteps slowly creaked on every step of the stairs. The bedroom door handle turned slowly. My hair stood on end, a shiver raced down my spine and a lump came to my throat. It was him. Three of us. We were the only ones left, the only ones to make it to the island.

# How should we start?

Openings can start with:

- Dialogue
- Action
- A setting
- Can you think of any other ways?



Choose one of the opening sentences  
for your class opening?



Agree on a success criteria?

A success criteria helps us to see what we need to include in your class story to make it a success. You need to make sure that you are including all of the ingredients below in your writing.

Example success criteria

- Hook the reader/audience
  - Ask questions
  - Dramatic action
- Introduce something appealing



THE LOWRY

### Opening paragraph example 1

The opening of *Alice through the Looking-Glass* by Lewis Carol:

“One thing was certain, that the *whitekitten* had had nothing to do with it:—it was the black kitten’s fault entirely. For the white kitten had been having its face washed by the old cat for the last quarter of an hour (and bearing it pretty well, considering); so you see that it *couldn’t* have had any hand in the mischief.”

## Opening Paragraph example 2

The opening paragraph of *The Once and Future King* by T. E. White.

“The young future king Arthur is nicknamed Wart. In the book Merlin changes Arthur into a variety of creatures as part of his schooling.

On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays it was Court Hand and Summulae Logicales, while the rest of the week it was the Organon, Repetition and Astrology. The governess was always getting muddled with her astrolabe, and when she got specially muddled she would take it out of the Wart by rapping his knuckles. She did not rap Kay’s knuckles, because when Kay grew older he would be Sir Kay, the master of the estate.

The Wart was called the Wart because it more or less rhymed with Art, which was short for his real name. Kay had given him the nickname. Kay was not called anything but Kay, as he was too dignified to have a nickname and would have flown into a passion if anybody had tried to give him one. The governess had red hair and some mysterious wound from which she derived a lot of prestige by showing it to all the women of the castle, behind closed doors. It was believed to be where she sat down, and to have been caused by sitting on some armour at a picnic by mistake. Eventually she offered to show it to Sir Ector, who was Kay’s father, had hysterics and was sent away. They found out afterwards that she had been in a lunatic hospital for three years.”

## Creating an opening for your own creative writing

You agreed your success criteria.  
Have you done all of them?

- Hook the reader
  - Ask questions
  - Dramatic action
- Introduce something appealing

Add words, phrases, fronted adverbials

Be as descriptive as you can be. You're painting a picture, using words

Opening

Choose one of the opening examples or make up your own starting sentence

Where are they going?

What mood or atmosphere do you want to create?

What do you think?

What can you see? Hear? Touch?

What do you wonder?

Who are they?

What can you see?

Where are they?



## What's in the opening?

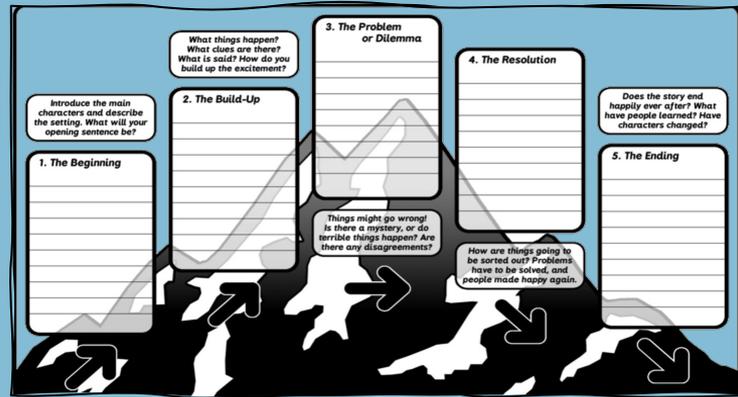
This covers all of the beginning of your planning sheet.

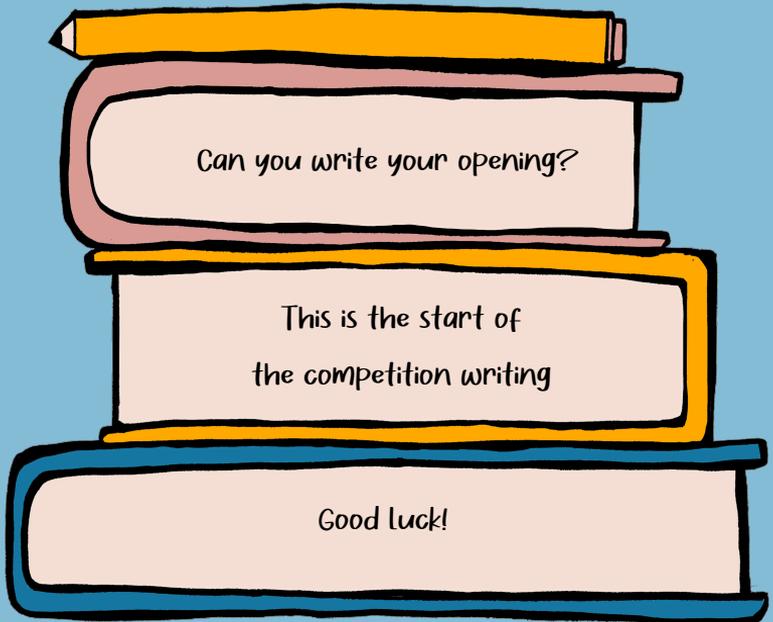
The setting, some of the main characters.

Some of the build up, on your planning sheet.  
Start leaving clues to excite the reader.

Remember that they need to be  
left asking questions.

Aim for 3 paragraphs





Can you write your opening?

This is the start of  
the competition writing

Good luck!

