

6-Traits of Writing: Organization

Leads, Leads, Leads

1. Begin with an unusual detail about your subject.

Example: Newborn sharks are not cared for by their parents-and often, in fact, are eaten alive by one parent or the other.

2. Begin with a question.

Example: Did you know that you lose your sense of smell when you are asleep?

3. Start with a quotation about your topic.

Example: Steve Bluestone once said, "Did you ever notice when you blow in a dog's face he gets mad at you? But when you take him in a car he sticks his head out the window."

4. Open by telling a short personal experience.

Example: I once ate 16 pancakes in one sitting.

5. Open with the most startling fact you know.

Example: Most fire deaths occur in the home when people are asleep – between midnight and 6:00 a.m.

6. Make a bold statement- startle the reader.

Example: Four out of five dog owners who think they're protecting their dogs are actually killing them by giving them the wrong food.

7. Set the scene with a vivid description (like the stage set for a play).

Example: There are dogs out there slowly losing their sight. Dogs with hair coming out in handfuls. Young dogs unable to jump on her owner's lap. Dogs everywhere slowly dying because owners didn't understand they were killing them with kindness.

8. Use dialogue.

Example: "Ouch!" said the girl.
"Why are you biting your own finger?" said the boy.

Ways to End

Suggest a conclusion you hope your reader drew.

Tell something you learned about the world/yourself.

Tell one thing you'll always remember.

Tell something that surprised, startled, disappointed, or pleased you.

Raise a new, related question.

Surprise the reader.

End with a scene or comment that suggests "more to come."

End with a quotation or dialogue that connects to main message.

Sum up- IF you can do it without being redundant.