



1.) **AN ACTION** - *Put your main character in your setting doing something interesting and relevant to the story.*

Ask: What would you do?

ex. Joey ran full steam ahead across the corral and jumped on the back of the wild stallion!

2.) **DIALOGUE** - *Have your main character say something.*

Ask: What might you say or exclaim?

ex. "I can't wait to see the Grand Canyon!" I shouted.

3.) **A THOUGHT OR QUESTION** - *Show the main character's thoughts, or raise a story question.*

Ask: What would you wonder or worry?

ex. I wondered if we'd make it out alive.

4.) **A SOUND** - *Grab the reader's attention through the use of a sound.*

Ask: What might you hear?

ex. BOOM! Jack flinched as the thunder and lightning rolled in over the hills.

Beginning tips - Begin your story as close to the main event as possible. For example, if it's a story about being marooned on a tropical island, don't begin the story two weeks before you leave, reading through travel brochures. Begin on or near the island. If you're writing about a day at the beach, don't begin waking up, getting dressed, and having breakfast--begin at the beach! Get right into the action so that you don't lose your reader! Also, since it is very difficult to weave many characters throughout the story, a good strategy is to have your main character start off alone.

MENU OF DETAIL GENERATING QUESTIONS AND SENTENCE STARTERS

QUESTIONS ABOUT A STORY CRITICAL CHARACTER -

• How tall/big was this character? • What color hair/eyes? • How old was the character? • What kind of eyes/nose/mouth/ears did he/she have? • What kind/color of hair did he/she have? (long, short, curly, straight, etc.) • What kind of marks, scars, or distinguishing characteristics did he/she have? • What was he/she wearing? • What kind of expression was on his/her face? • How did this character make you feel? • Who or what did this character remind you of?

QUESTIONS ABOUT A STORY CRITICAL SETTING -

• What was the temperature/weather like? • What kinds of trees/plants grew there? • How did the air feel? • What kinds of animals were there? • What kinds of buildings were there? • What kind of objects were around? • What kinds of sounds did you hear? • How did you feel about being there? • What did you smell?

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT A STORY CRITICAL OBJECT -

• What color was it? • What did it feel like? • What was its shape? • What size was it? • How old was it? • What was it made of? • What did it smell like? • What kind of sound did it make? • How heavy was it? • Who did it belong to? • Where did it come from? • What did it remind you of?

Notice that none of these are yes/no questions! Detail generating questions must be specific and must ask for particulars--not true/false/positive/negative! These are just some suggestions. Not all of them are applicable all the time, nor are these the only questions you can ask - students will likely think of other effective questions to add to this list.

<u>Feeling</u>	<u>What it Looks Like</u>
Happy	• smile on face • heart leaps • jump up and down • hands clasped together • eyes open wide
Sad	• eyes well up • lips quiver • heart drops • wring hands
Angry	• brow furrowed • frown • fists clenched • heart pounds • stamp feet • teeth clenched
Shocked	• mouth drops open • eyes open wide • heart pounds • cover mouth with your hand • jump back • gasp
Tired	• slump • yawn • eyes droop • legs feel heavy
Hot	• sweat beads on forehead • face gets red • wipe your brow • move slowly • fan yourself
Cold	• shiver • teeth chatter • hug yourself • blow into your hands • rub hands together
Frightened	• heart pounds • eyes wide open • start to sweat • knees feel weak • butterflies in stomach • mouth drops open

Menu for Extended Endings

- **A MEMORY:**
What did you remember most?
- **FEELINGS:**
How did you feel about what happened?
- **WISH or HOPE:**
What would you wish or hope?
- **DECISION:**
What did you decide?
- **DEFINING ACTION:**
What did you do?