



Seven Steps – 2009 Starting Quiz

Step 1: Plan for Success Which is the better plan?

- a) Max and his dad (who always fight) were camping by a river. A huge storm started and everything got washed away and his dad nearly drowned.
- b) Max and his dad were camping by a river. They fought a lot as Max's dad was a football champion and he thought his son wasn't strong or sporty enough. A huge storm started and everything got washed away. Trying to save their boat, Max's dad got trapped in the river under a log and nearly drowned. Even though he was scared of the water, Max used ropes and poles from the tent to save his dad. From that night on, they became strong friends and always went camping together.

ANS: (b) It has an ending. (See the story graph in the Teacher Manual or Student Workbooks.) Too many people start to write and then 'run out' of ideas after a few paragraphs. The more time you spend planning, the easier it is to write.

Step 2: Sizzling Starts Which start do you like the best?

- a) There was ice-cream in the salad and the potatoes were blue. Mum was cooking again.

- b) My Mum is a really bad cook. She is always trying new stuff and it never works.

ANS: (a) Like a movie, a TV show or a book, the start of a story has to grab you instantly. 'Orientation' does not have to be boring!

Step 3: Tightening Tension Which scene is more exciting – and more convincing?

- a) The ghost shot electricity at me and then slime. It smelt horrible. I was really scared.
- b) 'Arrrrh!' I screamed as the ghost attacked me. Electric jolts ran through my body, sucking out air, pushing in pain. Black slime oozed from its fingertips, over my arms and head. I was slipping in it, falling to my knees. All around me the air was sizzling, smelling like rotting rats. Then the ghost flew up high, laughing insanely and swooped down on me.

ANS: (b) Use SPECIFIC details (like the smell of rotting rats!) to build up tension. This makes it easy for the reader to see, hear, touch, taste and smell what your characters are going through. You know they are terrified, even though they never say it. Far more convincing!

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