



## Step 3: Tightening Tension

# Seven Steps Writing Tips

The tension scene comes just before the big climax at the end. In movies **this is the scene of the soccer final, the exciting car chase or the heroine fighting for her life in a raging river.** Great tension scenes should be strong and long.

We all know the tension scene in *Little Red Riding Hood*. Little Red Riding Hood arrives at the cottage and the wolf is in bed in Granny's clothes. Little Red Riding Hood (who obviously needs glasses!) says:

*'Oh, Grandmother, what big ears you have!'*

*'All the better to hear you with.'*

*'Oh, Grandmother, what big eyes you have!'*

*'All the better to see you with.'*

*'Oh, Grandmother, what big hands you have!'*

*'All the better to hold you with.'*

*'Oh, Grandmother, what big teeth you have!'*

*'All the better to eat you with!'*

See how the scene slowly builds up to be more and more dangerous – and thus frightening? We don't start with the teeth, we start with the ears and the wolf trying to coax Little Red Riding Hood to come nearer and nearer.

### TOP TIP:

Emotion always takes time to build up, so in tension scenes remember to start small and 'escalate' to a powerful climax.



### ACTION ACTIVITY:

Read picture books with your children and look for tension scenes. Picture books are short, so it's easy to find where the all-important tension builds before the ending. Here are some suggestions to get you started: *The Gruffalo*, *Wombat Stew*, *The Three Little Pigs*, *Hansel and Gretel*.

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Email: [office@sevenstepswriting.com](mailto:office@sevenstepswriting.com)

Phone: (03) 9521 8439

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