



## Step 2: Sizzling Starts

# On the weekend

### Before

- I went swimming.
- We went to the park.
- We watched TV.

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Recounts are often a list of things students have done with no sense of vibrancy or excitement. Try using the Sizzling Starts concept to help students write tight – and with life!

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### After

- I have a meat pie burn on my finger and a bigger burn on my tongue. Warning: Don't eat a pie at the footy that's been microwaved.
- Everyone loves fishing. Not me. And not the worm I had to put squiggling and wriggling onto the hook.
- We cleaned out the shed. I bet 20 million spiders are now homeless.



## Step 2: Sizzling Starts

# My holiday highlights

### Before

*During the holidays, Mum and Dad took me skiing for the first time. We drove to the mountain and unpacked all the gear. The next morning, we all got up...*

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Kids often get locked into a linear story structure. Encourage them to start with action and then backfill to grab the reader's interest.

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### After

*The air was crisp, the snow was wickedly white and I was skiing fast down the mountain. Way too fast!*

*'Look out!' I cried and the 300 people in the tow queue straight ahead ducked in fear.*

*My family had gone skiing for the weekend, but the single lesson I'd taken that morning had neglected to teach me how to stop. Now suddenly it seemed like the whole mountain was flashing before my eyes.*



### Step 3: Tightening Tension

## An earthquake ruined my birthday

### Before

*We were having fun in the restaurant when suddenly the ground started to shake. I didn't believe it. Then glasses started to break all over my plate. My sister tried to stand up, she was afraid. The ground was trembling, there was noise everywhere...*

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**The writer tries to use senses to build tension, but it could be much better...**  
 .....

### After

*The waiter smiled as he put down a hot chocolate pudding right in front of me.*

*'You're not going to eat all that!' said my Dad. 'Here, I'll help!' He reached across with his spoon, he was always teasing me. I pulled my plate away fast. Everyone laughed.*

*'Just a little bit,' Dad begged.*

*I shook my head. It was weird, but there was a strange buzzing sound as if everything was not quite real. I lifted my spoon, my hands felt like they were shivering. Or was it really the floor shaking? It wasn't possible, but now all the glasses were starting to clink. Suddenly one fell, shattering glass across my hands and pudding. Then the noise hit me, harsh, grinding, vibrating right into my brain...*