



Step 7: Exciting Endings

Seven Steps Writing Tips

A common problem with childrens' stories is they end on an anticlimax.

For example, in this sports story Belinda begs to join the volleyball team, but she isn't very good. Jackie the captain helps her and gradually a friendship forms. At match point in the final game, Belinda sets a perfect ball to Jackie. Here's the last sentence:

Jackie jumped high, hope giving her strength and she hit the ball hard. It landed right in the corner. They'd won! Then they all went home to bed.

Why has the writer tacked on that last line? The answer is they feel something is missing, but they don't know what. We need to show young writers that there are often two parts to ending a story – the action climax and the 'inner' story. The story is not just about volleyball; it needs a celebration of the friendship that has grown between the two girls. For example:

'We did it! We won!' Everyone was yelling and hugging each other. Jackie just turned and looked at Belinda.

'Great set,' she said. Belinda laughed.

'Great hit,' she said.

At last she really was part of the team.

TOP TIP:

Solve the action part of the story (like winning the final game), but also allow for the characters and their inner journey to be celebrated too.

Action Activity:

Many authors actually come up with the ending first and then figure out the story by working backwards. Here's a fun ending: Crocodiles don't like flyspray.

Try brainstorming with your children what the story could be. You can be as crazy as you like!

