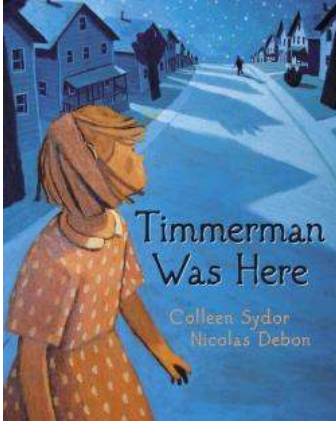


# Writing Trait: Organization

## Learning Intention: Writing Lead Sentences to Hook Reader

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by Colleen Sydor

### After Reading:

Learning Outcomes: A4, A5, A6, B5

Read the first two sentences of this story while showing the picture. Then have students turn and talk to predict what this story might be about. Who could Timmerman be? Why might someone not like him? Share a few ideas with the whole class. Ask students what they notice about the first two sentences? (They create a hint of mystery)

Turn to the front cover illustration and have partners predict what this story might be about based on this picture. Have a few students share their ideas with their class.

### During Reading:

Learning Outcomes: A6, B5

Pause a few times as the book is read aloud to share new predictions. Explain that when predictions are grounded in evidence they may not end up being correct, but they are not wrong either. They just need to be adjusted.

### After Reading:

Learning Outcomes: A5, B7, C3, C4, C8

Zinsser, in his book called, *On Writing Well*, states that, "The most important sentence in any article is the first one. If it doesn't induce the reader to proceed to the second sentence, your article is dead" (p. 65). Many writing experts agree. Vicki Spandel, author of *Creating Writers Through 6-trait Writing: Assessment and Instruction* suggests having children write multiple leads for their own work. She states that students rarely do this "[which] is unfortunate because this practice needs to be a habit" (p.213).

So, in this lesson, students will use a lead chart (attached) to write a variety of opening sentences for *Timmerman Was Here*. A page of examples is also attached, but showing these to students may limit creative thinking, so perhaps share after they've experimented themselves, or just read yourself. After working on this task for a while, do a zip around and have students share their favourite example.

This lesson may be repeated with other books of your choice. Try a fairy tale or a book with humorous content.

When students are writing their own story, they can experiment with a variety of leads to hook their reader—because, "...this practice needs to be a habit."

## WRITING LEADS

Try writing a variety of leads for a familiar story.  
When you're finished, choose your favourite one.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Question	Quotation	Interesting Fact	Strong Feeling/Opinion
One Word or a Tiny Sentence	Mysterious	Sound Effect	Sets the Mood

## WRITING LEADS EXAMPLES

Try writing a variety of leads for a familiar story.  
When you're finished, choose your favourite one.

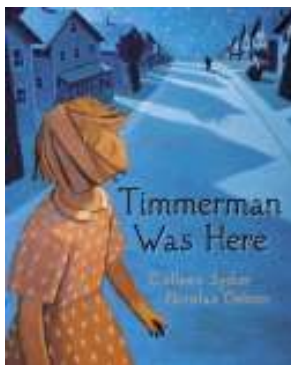
By: \_\_\_\_\_

<p>Question</p> <p><b>Can you trust a stranger?</b></p>	<p>Quotation</p> <p><b>"I will not like him. I will not like him," I repeated to myself.</b></p>	<p>Interesting Fact</p> <p><b>When a stranger moves into your house, be prepared.</b></p>	<p>Strong Feeling/Opinion</p> <p><b>Timmerman could not replace my Grandad.</b></p>
<p>One Word or a Tiny Sentence</p> <p><b>Who is he?</b></p>	<p>Mysterious</p> <p><b>Who was this man moving into our house?</b></p>	<p>Sound Effect</p> <p><b>Bzzzz rang the doorbell.</b></p>	<p>Sets the Mood</p> <p><b>I sat on my swing, barely moving, thinking of my Grandad and how he was doing.</b></p>

## Writing Trait: **Organization**

Learning Intention: Finding and Writing Endings that surprise

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by Colleen Sydor

### **After Reading:**

Learning Outcomes: B 11, C 5

Surprise endings are a delight for the reader. Students enjoy reading books that have a twist at the end. So, take students into the library. Have them read a variety of picture books and search for examples of books that have surprise endings. Create a chart listing examples or gather a collection for your room to serve as examples of this writing skill. Please send me examples of books you find that fit this description and I can create a virtual bin on-line.

### **Circular Story Endings: Matching Leads and Endings**

An effective way to end a story can be to repeat an effective lead ... just add a little twist:

e.g.

**Lead:** When a stranger moves into your house, be prepared.

**Ending:** When a stranger moves into your house, be prepared because amazing things might happen!

or,

**Lead:** Bzzz, rang the doorbell.

**Ending:** Bzzz, rang the doorbell. Who could it be this time?

or,

**Lead:** Can you trust a stranger?

**Ending:** Can you trust a stranger? When your heart says yes, it might be the right thing to do.

Have students pair up their favourite lead, with an ending that has a little twist! When you read examples like these, written by your students, you'll be impressed.