

Little Red Riding Hooks...

From Dena Harrison, NNWP Consultant and Middle School Teacher

Great alternatives to introductions, hooks, and leads

“Once upon a time, there lived a little girl with a red riding hood...” ← KIND OF A BORING, CLICHÉ INTRO!

There are more interesting ways to start off this famous story. Below are eight techniques to consider:

Technique one: Start with a short (four- or five-word maximum), effective sentence:

Her hair shone gold.

Technique two: Start with an interesting metaphor or simile:

The wolf was a tornado, changing the lives of all who crossed his path.

Technique three: Start with an interesting question for the reader to ponder:

Who could have thought that a simple trip to Grandma’s house could end in tragedy?

Technique four: Start with a subordinate clause or other complex sentence form:

Though the road to Grandma’s house was spooky, Red skipped along with an air of confidence.

Technique five: Start with a riddle:

Who has big eyes, big teeth and is dressed in Grandma’s clothes? Yes, you guessed it, the Big Bad Wolf.

Technique six: Fill in these blanks: “ ___ was the kind of ___ who/that ___ ”

Little Red was the kind of girl who thought wolves would never bother her.

Technique seven: Capture a feeling or emotion:

You might be surprised to learn that a little girl couldn’t recognize her own grandmother.

Technique eight: Use a string of adjectives:

Tall, dark, and with an air of confidence, the woodsman entered the house.

What fairy tales, fables, or stories are your students familiar enough with to write eight new, possible introductions for?