

Great Leads

Grades 6-8

Possible leads to read aloud to the class to demonstrate how setting, action, character, reflection, event, or dialogue can lead you into a story:

Avi. *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*. Harper Trophy, 1990.

"Not every thirteen-year-old girl is accused of murder, brought to trial, and found guilty. But I was just such a girl, and my story is worth relating even if it did happen years ago."

Blume, Judy. *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*. Double Day, 1970.

"Are you there God? It's me, Margaret. We're moving today. I'm so scared God. I've never lived anywhere but here. Suppose I hate my new school? Suppose everybody there hates me? Please help me God. Don't let New Jersey be too horrible. Thank you."

Howe, James. *The Misfits*.

"So here I am, not a half-hour old as a tie salesman and trying to look like I know what I was doing, which have got to be two of the biggest jokes of all time, when who should walk into Awkworth & Ames Department Store but Skeeze Tookis."

Juster, Norton. *The Phantom Tollbooth*. Random House, 1961.

"There was a boy named Milo who didn't know what to do with himself – not just sometimes, but always."

L'Engle, Madeline. *A Wrinkle In Time*. Bantom Doubleday Dell Books for Young Readers, 1962.

"It was a dark and stormy night."

Lowry, Lois. *The Giver*. Houghton Mifflin, 1993.

"It was almost December, and Jonas was beginning to be frightened. No. Wrong word, Jonas thought. Frightened meant that deep, sickening feeling of something terrible about to happen."

Philbrick, Rodman. *Freak the Mighty*. Scholastic, 2001.

"I never had a brain until Freak came along and let me borrow his for awhile, and that's the truth, the whole truth. The unvanquished truth is how Freak would say it..."

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Philbrick, Rodman. *The Last Book in the Universe*. Scholastic Signature, 2000.

"If You're reading this, it must be a thousand years from now. Because nobody around here reads anymore. Why bother when you can just probe it?"

Ryan, Pam Munoz. *Esperanza Rising*. Scholastic, 2000.

"Our land is alive, Esperanza," said Papa, taking her small hand as they walked through the gentle slopes of the vineyard."

Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. Scholastic, 1997.

"Mr. and Mrs. Dursley, of number four Privet Drive, were proud to say that they were perfectly normal, thank you very much."

Spinelli, Jerry. *Stargirl*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2000.

"When I was little, my uncle Pete had a necktie with a porcupine painted on it. I thought that necktie was just about the neatest thing in the world."

Taylor, Mildred D. *The Friendship*. Puffin, 1998.

"Now don't y'all go touchin' nothin'," Stacey warned as we stepped onto the porch of the Wallace store. Christopher-John, Little Man, and I readily agreed to that. After all, we weren't even supposed to be up here. "And Cassie," he added, "don't you say nothin'."

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Hobbit*. George Allen and Unwin, 1937.

"In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort."

Yolen, Jane. *The Devil's Arithmetic*. Puffin Books, 1988.

"I'm tired of remembering," Hannah said to her mother as she climbed into the car. She was flushed with April sun and her mouth felt sticky from jelly beans and Easter candy."

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*. Pocket Books, 1990.

"You better not never tell nobody but God. It'd kill your mammy."