

Great Leads

Grades 3-5

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."

Barker, Clive. *The Thief of Always*. HarperCollins Publishers, 1992.

"The Great Gray beast February had eaten Harvey Swick alive. Here he was, buried in the belly of that smothering month."

Blume, Judy. *Superfudge*. Puffin Books, 1980.

"Life was going along okay when my mother and father dropped the news. *Bam!* Just like that."

Cleary, Beverly. *Ramona the Pest*. William Morrow and Company, 1968.

"I am *not* a pest," Ramona Quimby told her big sister Beezus.
"Then stop asking like a pest," said Beezus, whose real name was Beatrice. She was standing by the front window waiting for her friend Mary Jane to walk to school with her."

Curtis, Christopher Paul. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963*.

Delacorte Press, 1995.

"It was one of those super-duper-cold Saturdays. One of those days that when you breathed out your breath kind of hung frozen in the air like a hunk of smoke and you could walk along and look exactly like a train blowing out big, fat, white puffs of smoke. It was so cold that if you were stupid enough to go outside your eyes would automatically blink a thousand times all by themselves, probably so the juice inside of them wouldn't freeze up. It was so cold that if you spit, the slob would be an ice cube before it hit the ground. It was about a zillion degrees below zero."

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Curtis, Christopher Paul. *Bud, Not Buddy*. Yearling, 2002.

"Here we go again. We were all standing in line waiting for breakfast when one of the caseworkers came in and tap-tap-tapped down the line. Uh-oh, this meant bad news, either they'd found a foster home for somebody or somebody was about to get paddled. All the kids watched the woman as she moved along the line, her high-heeled shoes sounding like little firecrackers going off on the wooden floor."

Fleischman, Paul. *Weslandia*. Candlewick Press, 1999.

"Of course he's miserable," moaned Wesley's mother. "He sticks out."
"Like a nose," snapped his father.

MacLachlan, Patricia. *Sarah, Plain and Tall*. Harper Trophy, 1995.

"Did Mama sing every day?" asked Caleb. "Every-single-day?"

Sachar, Louis. *Holes*. Dell Yearling, 1998.

"There is no lake at Camp Green Lake. There once was a very large lake here, the largest in Texas. That was over a hundred years ago. Now it is just a dry, flat wasteland. There used to be a town of Green Lake as well. The town shriveled and dried up along with the lake, and the people who lived there. During the summer the daytime temperature hovers around ninety-five degrees in the shade-if you can find any shade. There's not much shade in a big dry lake. The only trees are two old oaks on the eastern edge of the "lake". A hammock is stretched between the two trees, and a log cabin stands between that. The campers are forbidden to lie in the hammock. It belongs to the Warden. The Warden owns the shade. Out on the lake, rattlesnakes and scorpions find shade under rocks and in the holes dug by the campers."

White, E.B. *Charlotte's Web*. Dell Publishing. 1969.

"Where's Papa going with that ax?" said Fern to her mother as they were setting the table for breakfast.