Writing Basics → Ending with a Cliffhanger

Level: Elementary School

A successful essay or story leaves your reader wanting more. In an essay, the cliffhanger leaves your reader with something to think about. In a story, the cliffhanger can leave the door open for a sequel (the next story about the same characters) or it may just encourage the reader to read on to the next chapter. One place to find examples of cliffhangers is on book jackets or covers. The text gives you an idea of the story, leaving you wanting to read more.

Read descriptions from two book flaps or back covers. The cliffhanger is likely to be in the last sentence or two of the description. Use what you read to do the activities below.

1. Choose a cliffhanger that you thought was especially effective. Write the sentence(s) here.

2. What grabbed you about the cliffhanger? What did you want to find out?

3. Think about a story you have read. Write a cliffhanger that would encourage other people to read the story.

Time4Writing provides these writing materials to teachers and parents at no cost. More presentations, handouts, interactive online exercises, and video lessons are freely available at Time4Writing.com. Consider linking to these resources from your school, teacher, or homeschool educational site. The rules: These materials must maintain the visibility of the Time4Writing trademark and copyright information. They can be copied and used for educational purposes. They are not for resale. Want to give us feedback? We'd like to hear your views: info@time4writing.com

Copyright 2011 Time4Writing. All Rights Reserved.