

## Writing Basics → Ending with a Cliffhanger Level: High School

*A cliffhanger can be an effective ending for an essay. An essay cliffhanger might **challenge the reader to act**, **leave an opening** for more information or future developments, or **end with a question** for the reader to ponder. For example, "The melting of the icecaps has been confirmed by even the most sceptical scientists. How long will it be before rising waters affect our cities and coastlines?"*

**Brainstorm some topics for which each of the three techniques would be effective. Write one topic and a sample cliffhanger for each of the techniques below.**

**Technique: Challenge the reader to act.**

**Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cliffhanger Type -- (Circle one):**      question      dialogue      descriptive scene

**Cliffhanger:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Technique: Leave an opening for more information or developments in the future.**

**Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cliffhanger Type -- (Circle one):**      question      dialogue      descriptive scene

**Cliffhanger:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Technique:** End with something for the reader to ponder.

**Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cliffhanger Type -- (Circle one):**      question      dialogue      descriptive scene

**Cliffhanger:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_