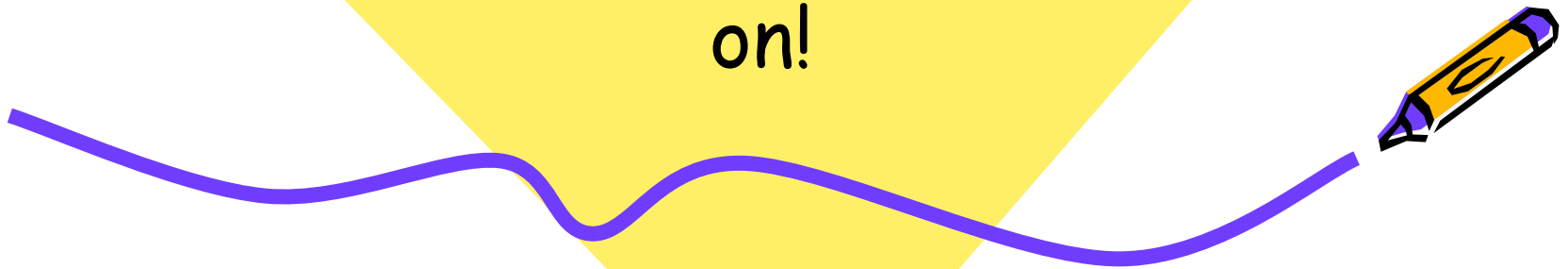


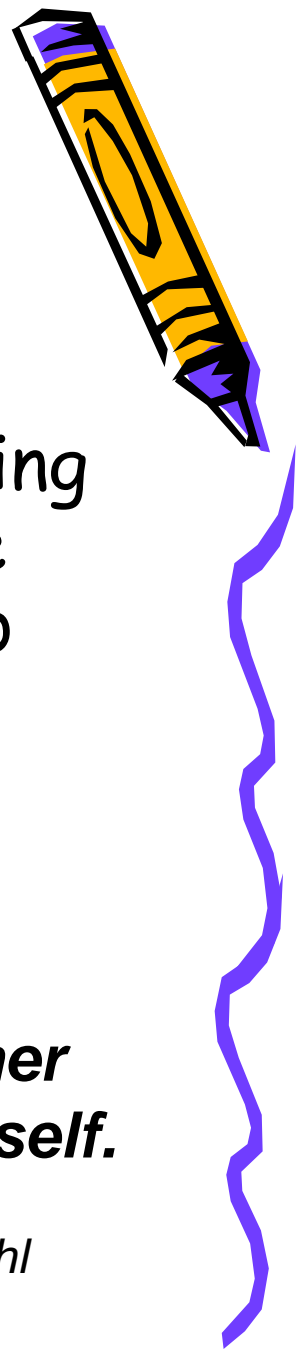


Story Openings

How to keep you reader reading
on!



Why is the opening important?



- The first few lines of any piece of writing are essential because they set the tone and, hopefully, make the reader want to read on. This is known as a hook.

When I was four months old, my mother died suddenly, and my father was left to look after me all by himself.

Danny The Champion Of The World by Roald Dahl



How do you make the reader want to read on?



- The first line should leave the reader asking a question. This question should invite the reader to keep reading.



***I disappeared on the night
before my twelfth birthday.***

Kensuke's Kingdom by Michael Morpurgo



How should I begin?

- There are many different ways to start a story. Here are a few of them:
- Description of a character:



Once there were four children whose names were Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy.

The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe by CS Lewis



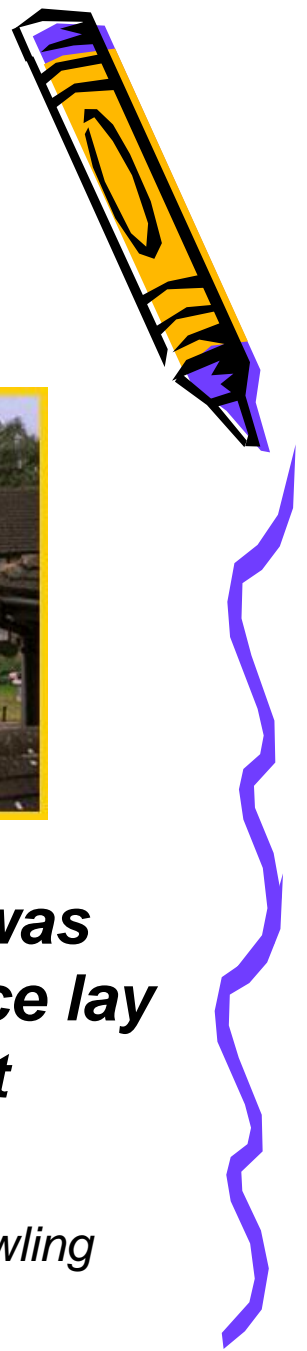
Or you could begin with...

- Description of setting:



The hottest day of the summer so far was drawing to a close and a drowsy silence lay over the large, square houses of Privet Drive.

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix by JK Rowling



Or how about...

- Description of setting *and* character:



A thousand miles ago, in a country east of the jungle and south of the mountains, there lived a Firework-Maker called Lalchand and his daughter Lila.

The Firework-Maker's Daughter by Phillip Pullman



Or maybe...

- Action:



*Peter crouched
over the fire,
stirring the embers
so that the sparks
swarmed up like
imps on the rocky
walls of hell.*

*Count Karlstein by Phillip
Pullman*



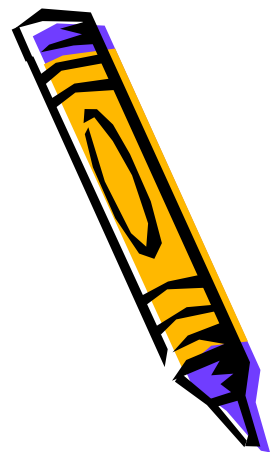
Or...

- Dialogue:



“I’m going shopping in the village,” George’s mother said to George on Saturday morning. “So be a good boy and don’t get up to mischief.”

George’s Marvellous Medicine by Roald Dahl



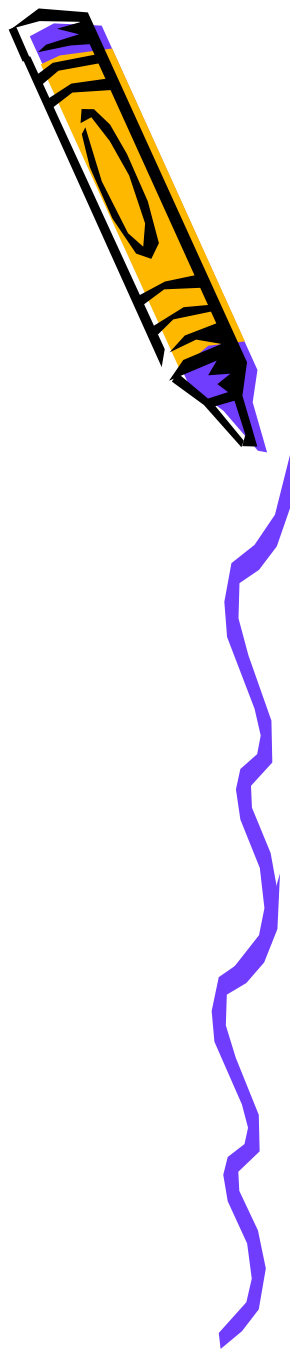
How about...

- A question:



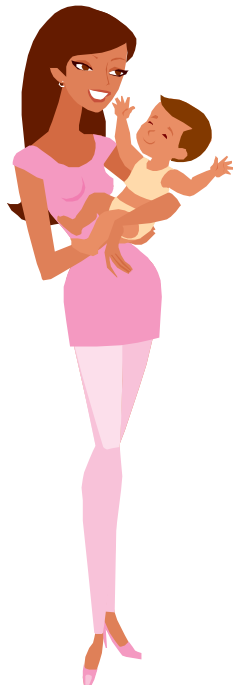
***Ever had the feeling your life's
been flushed down the toilet?***

The Toilet of Doom by Michael Lawrence



Or maybe...

- A statement:



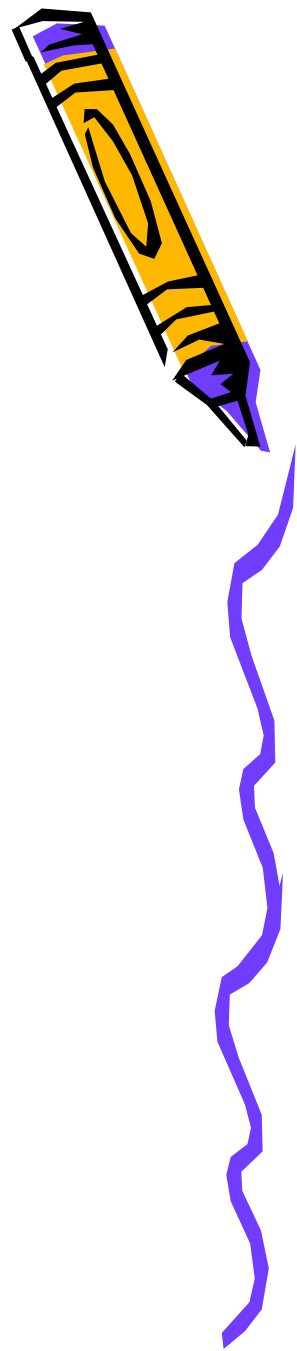
It's a funny thing about mothers and fathers. Even when their own child is the most disgusting little blister you could ever imagine, they still think that he or she is wonderful.

Matilda by Roald Dahl



Remember!

- The opening of a story should normally tell the reader:
 - Where and when the story is set
 - Who the characters are
 - The style and mood of the story

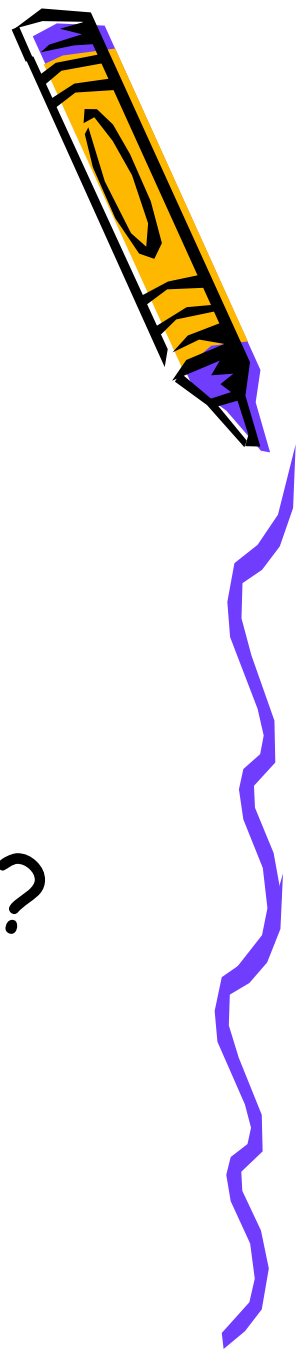


Don't forget!

- Your opening should also have a 'hook'. That is, something to keep the reader interested and make him or her want to read more.
- Now try planning your own story opening.



First you need to think
about...



- The who, where, when and what!
 - Who is your story about?
 - Where and When is it set?
 - What is going to happen?

