

Write Trait Lesson - April 13th Organization

One of the most important things to consider when we are planning our writing is to think about our **lead** or **beginning**. A strong lead is going to hook the reader and have them excited to read on! A plain or boring lead might just scare them away or send them to look for something more interesting to read.

Example 1: You choose the Lead-er!

Here are two different leads for two different pieces of writing. In each case, read both leads and then decide which one (A or B) works better. Be prepared to explain why you chose that lead.

Two possible leads for the a story about a calf.

A. We live on a ranch with lots of cattle. For some reason, one calf did not want to drink milk from her mother the way a calf usually does. She would get sick if she didn't. My grandpa and dad had to push the mother into a small pen. They milked her into a baby bottle and then fed the calf through the bottle.

B. Without her mother's milk, my grandma said our new baby calf would get sick and die. I didn't want that to happen, but the little calf would not snuggle up under her mom and drink - and already she was almost too weak to stand. Grandpa said we would have to do something drastic. He and Dad would herd the nervous mother into the chute and milk her into a bottle for the calf. This was the little calf's only chance, so I sure hoped it would work.

Lead A or B? _____

Why? _____

Two possible leads about a report for snakes.

A. "Seeing" heat? "Tasting" air? Are these some of the special powers of a new super hero? No! They are just two of the strange things that the pit viper and the eyelash viper can do to help them hunt and defend themselves. Come with me now into the amazing world of snakes.

B. Some people think snakes are really scary. Some people think snakes are really cool. This report will show you how both are right. Snakes can be very scary, but also can do some things like tasting the air that makes them really cool.

Lead A or B? _____

Why? _____

Your Turn!

Choose a topic from the following list (or make up your own!)

- Your favourite reptile
- Baby animals
- An outdoor adventure
- A long car trip
- Your own topic: _____

You are going to write **two leads**. One of them should be really strong. Create a lead that will make the reader want to keep reading! The other lead should be weak. Make it so dull that your reader will want to run from your writing. Use the examples you've just read to help, as well as the bold beginnings document on my website. Once finished, have a family member read your leads and decide which one was the strong lead and which one was weak!

Become the critic: Look at the book you are reading write now. Go back and read the introduction. Is it strong? Are there things

the author could have done to improve it? Discuss with a family member.