

Exercise Four- Openings

Over the last few weeks you have been writing material that will help you when you sit down to write your first short story, which we will be doing in couple of weeks. Creating characters, writing about memories and coming up with story scenarios are all great ways to build confidence. Eventually, we have to sit down and write the story.

With this in mind, I thought it would be nice to have some fun with our task this week.

We all know what it's like to open a book and read a killer first line, paragraph or page that immediately hooks us and leaves us unable to put the book down. It's what every writer aims to do- hook the reader and never let them go.

Here are twenty great opening lines to get you thinking about the kind of story you want to tell and how best to start it:

<https://www.dailywritingtips.com/20-great-opening-lines-to-inspire-the-start-of-your-story/>

This week we're focussing on bad openings. **Really** bad openings. In fact, the worst opening to a story you could think of.

The Bulwer-Lytton prize has been running since 1982 and has 'challenged man, woman, and (very precocious child) to write an atrocious opening sentence to a hypothetical bad novel.' <https://www.bulwer-lytton.com>

Their 2019 winner was:

'Space Fleet Commander Brad Brad sat in silence, surrounded by a slowly dissipating cloud of smoke, maintaining the same forlorn frown that had been fixed upon his face since he'd accidentally destroyed the phenomenon known as time, thirteen inches ago.'

Wonderful in how awful it is.

Now have a go yourself. There's absolutely nothing to worry about because...it's supposed to be terrible!

Try and write ten awful openings and read them out loud to yourself or family. What makes them so bad? Why would it definitely make you close the book?

It is fun, but it also helps you understand what makes a **great** opening. This is what we'll be focussed on next time, and that's when it gets hard. So enjoy your terrible writing and please share them with us!

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