

Start, Stop, and Title It



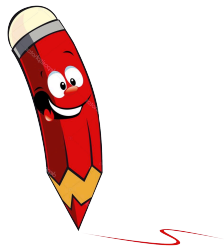
Start



It's all about options!

Anecdote

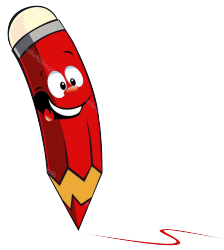
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There's an old joke that goes like this: "I don't know what I'm looking for, but when I find it, I'll let you know."



Spirit!, Mar/Apr 1986

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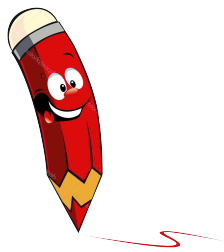


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Anecdote

A wee story that stands on its own, usually ending with a punch line. Usually funny.

There's an old joke that goes like this: "I don't know what I'm looking for, but when I find it, I'll let you know." It's a fitting motto for the growing trend of "career hopping." Why aren't we content to plug in to a job and go for the gold watch? Are we a fickle generation? Are we lobbying to make irresponsibility a virtue?



Spirit!, Mar/Apr 1986

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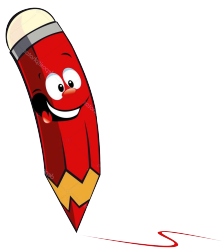


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Event / Incident

A “reported” happening, closely connected to the topic matter, but not the topic itself.

The launch bobbed across the Bay of Maples and drew alongside a hulking U.S. Army transport ship...On board...were nearly a thousand refugees, most of them Jewish....It was the summer of 1944; war still raged, and Hitler’s concentration camps were murdering millions.



Reader’s Digest, Feb. 2001



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Story about Ruth Gruber who worked with a secret government mission to rescue Jews.



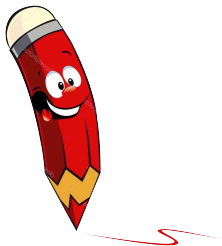
Reader’s Digest, Feb. 2001



Reflection

A nostalgic or pondering look back on something significant and the lesson learned.

In March of 1999, I was the only doctor at a scientific station in Antarctica. The lonely outpost, the extreme cold and the 24-hour winter darkness all appealed to my spirit of adventure. Then, one fearful day, I found a lump in my breast.



Reader's Digest, Feb. 2001

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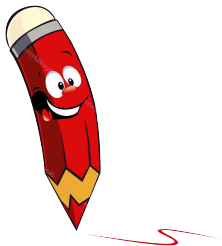


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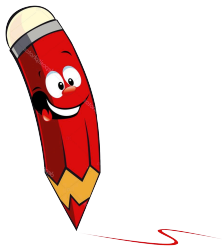


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Statement

A straightforward statement of fact, naming (or suggesting) the topic idea.

More than thirty years after its onset, *Beattlemania* is once again sweeping the country.



Reader's Digest, March 2001

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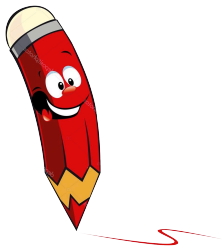


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Startling Statement

An alarming statement designed to grab the reader's attention.

- In their mid-30s, women begin losing about one-third of a pound of muscle a year.
- A man accused of killing undercover state trooper Edward M. Totally was on probation at the time of his alleged crime.



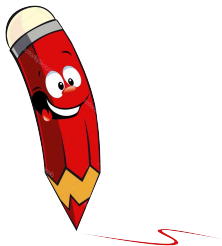
Reader's Digest, March 2001



Emphatic Statement

A “no nonsense” declaration that sets the tone.

There is no way the carpet guys are going to that giant roll of Berber up the winding staircase.



Reader's Digest, March 2001

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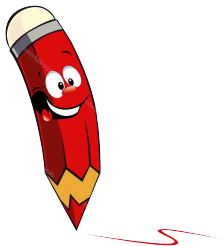


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Summary

A concise, telling statement that explains what the essay or article is about.

When I started working at the bank, I had never had a checking account, and debit and credit were merely words that rhymed. No one then knew I would one day end up losing the bank \$1,200.



Arizona Magazine, Nov 18, 1980

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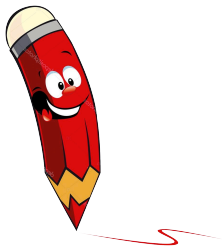


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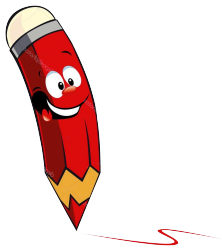


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Quotation

A pertinent quote that introduces the topic under discussion.

“More than 40 billion dollars is spent each year on diet products,” claims an eating disorder organization.



Reader's Digest, March 2001

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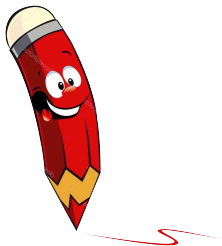


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

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“More than 40 billion dollars is spent each year on diet products,” claims an eating disorder organization. ***And we’re wondering where we can get the money to feed the world’s hungry?***



Reader’s Digest, March 2001

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Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

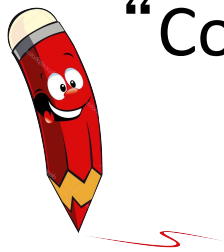
Dialog

Letting the reader eavesdrop yanks the reader right in.

“Mom, can I get a belly ring?” My 14-year-old daughter plunks the *Newsweek* magazine down on the kitchen table and points to the picture of a young woman’s taut, tan stomach. Nestled in her belly button is a sparkling white stone. And radiating outward from the stone is a sun-shaped tattoo.

“It’s so...” my daughter searches for the right word.

“Cool,” she finishes lamely.



Newsweek, March 5, 2001



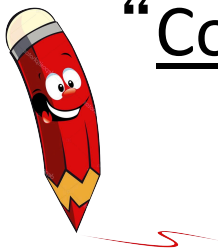
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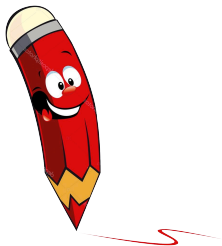


Newsweek, March 5, 2001

Description

Narrowing in and focusing on the visuals first sets the mood.

- A rippling breeze swept the Canadian plains as I stepped outside the two-story clapboard house.
- The tent door was flapping so much in the wind that it was hard to unzip it. I stumbled outside into the dark-ness and turned on my headlamp, illuminating the slashes of rain that hammered against the thin nylon walls.



Reader's Digest, March 2001

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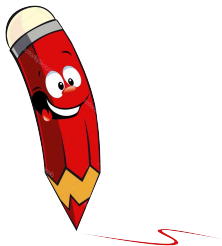


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Query

Asking a question germane to the topic.

Steely Dan? Best album? Didn't they break up in, like, 1976?



Reader's Digest, March 2001

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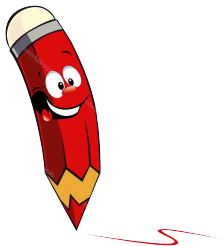


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Steely Dan? Best album? Didn't they break up in, like, 1976?
It was one of the many comments overheard at the 43rd Grammy Awards following the announcement that the most utterly irrelevant nominee in the top category won out over Eminem, Radiohead, Paul Simon and Beck.



Reader's Digest, March 2001

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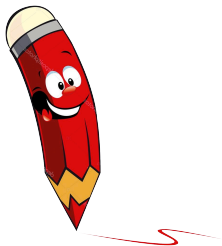


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Survey

Brief statistics of a survey regarding the topic.

Men who took annual vacations were **17 percent less likely** to die over a nine-year period than those who'd skipped vacations—and **32 percent less likely** to die of heart disease--say researchers at the University of New York at Oswego.



Reader's Digest, March 2001

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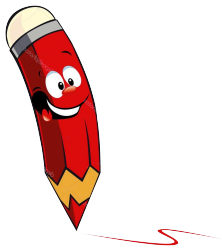


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Scene

An on-stage look at people who will be key (or symbolic) actors in your essay, in order to create a sense of immediacy.

Floyd Stokes stirred awake in the pitch-darkness, and immediately felt the autumn chill. The 57-year-old peanut farmer had never minded early mornings.... Now, though, he had to struggle just to get out of bed. Constricted arteries caused him chest pain that at times was almost unbearable.... Doctors had tried to do everything...



Reader's Digest, March 2001

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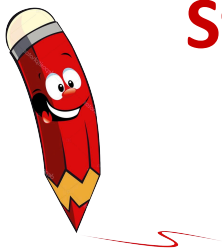
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Story about his wife's search for a cure.



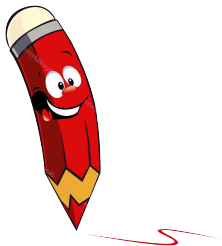
Reader's Digest, March 2001



Metaphor

Offer word pictures rather than words.

Like everyone else, I've been through a few **thunderstorms**.



Happiness Magazine, Aug/Sep 2011

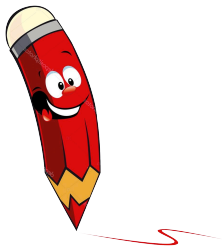
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Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Combination Leads

Remember the old nursery rhyme, “Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great fall?” In 1968 Jim Martinson fell off the wall. The place? Vietnam.



Sports 'N Spokes, March/April 1991

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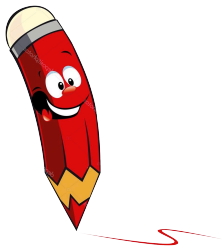


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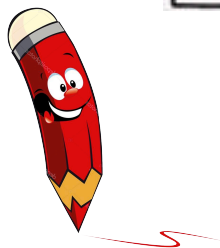
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- *question*
- *startling statement*
- *summary*

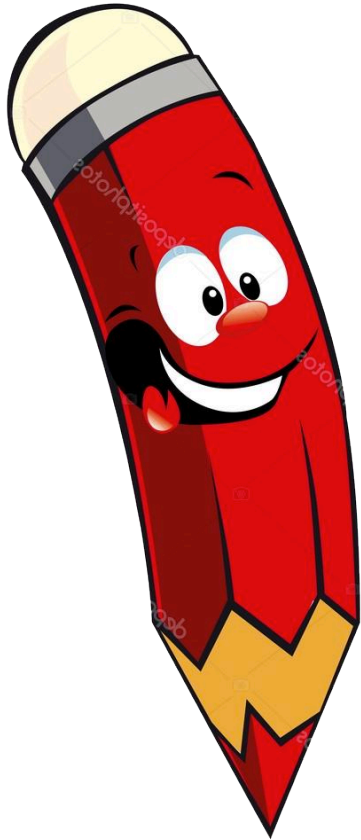


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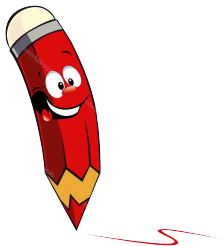




Stops



It's all about options!

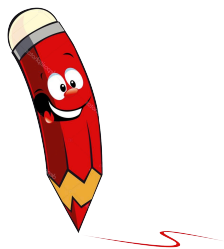


Stops



*You can use “all of above.”
...and a few more.*

It's all about options!

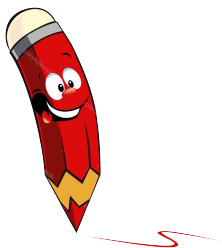


Anecdote

Can be used to summarize or underscore your thesis.

A neighborhood mom had a t-shirt that read S E X. That evening while my sister was giving my 6-year-old a bath, Heather asked her, “What does S E X mean?”

My sister explained. Heather was quiet for awhile. Then said with smile, “Oh, now I know why you and Uncle Bruce don’t have any children. You haven’t sexed yet.”



Health Quarterly, Spring 1988

2018 © Brenda Wilbee



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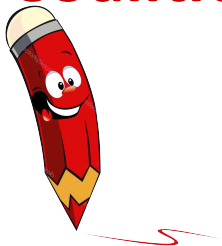
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**Abstinence. A worthy goal for Whatcom County’s
“Coalition Against Teen Pregnancy.”**



Health Quarterly, Spring 1988

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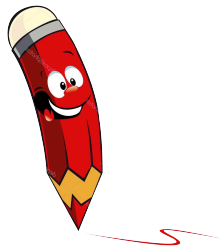
Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Reflective

Underscores the thesis.

I watched as \$1,200 was printed in red on my permanent record. Curses on auditors...

It's been five years now since I quit. My husband, finished with his schooling, is now a...well, he's an auditor. He goes off to work each day with wary fingers and a watchful eye. And I stay at home and wish at times I could go back to work.



Romance Writers' Report, May 1879

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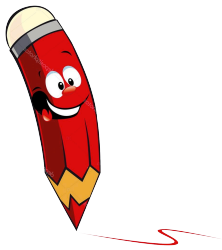
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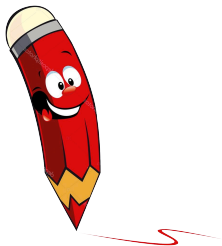


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Statement

A restatement of thesis.

The whole notion of where we choose to spend our money can be an exciting one. **No longer does that million dollars have to pass through our hands unproductively.**



Spirit!, Jan/Feb 1986

2018 © Brenda Wilbee

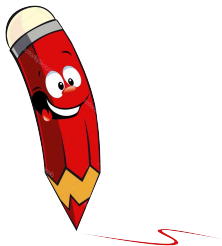


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Emphatic Statement

Dramatic rephrase of thesis.

Before you blame violence on children of single parents, go to the source—violent men who need help, not death.



Bellingham Herald, Mar 20, 1994

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Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Summary

Reduce entirety to bare bones.

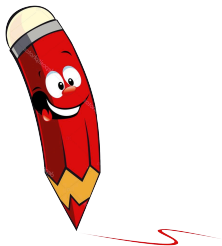
In conclusion, there is much we can do. We need not cower behind our fear of too many giants. Marching statistics and ruined lives need not intimidate us.

We can start defining our purpose...

We can then learn what these giants are...

Finally, we can draw our battle lines...

It's that simple.



Canadian Lutheran, Oct 1988

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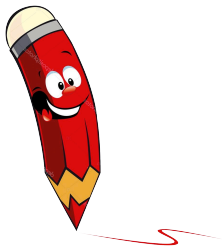


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Quotation

Use a quote and/or statistic to nail your thesis.

“Our role,” says David White, “is to say, ‘This is where I blew it. Please don’t make the same mistake.’”



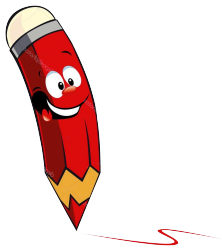
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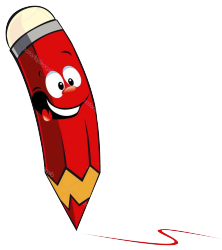


Dialog

Let your guys have the last word.

“If there hadn’t been a guy like Polinder to pull this thing off,” says Gass, speaking intensely, “I’d have had to invent on just like him!”

Polinder responds: “It’s a real heartwarming experience to hug someone who before wouldn’t even look at me. To have a friend where there once was an enemy.”



Moody Monthly, Dec 1987

2018 © Brenda Wilbee



Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Description

If used in a loop, you can frame your thesis within metaphorical imagery.

Intro: There were only a few cars on the streets as I drove into downtown Vancouver, BC, on New Year's Day 1978. The mountains were veiled in the fog that hung over the city, hiding their snowcapped peaks from view...

—

Conc: Leaning against the pillow, I looked out toward the mountains. The morning mist was gone and their jagged peaks stood out sharply against the sky...



Power For Living, Sep Oct Nov 1981

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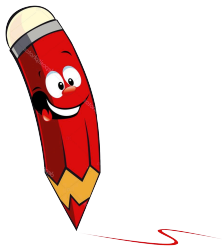


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Query

Asking questions to drive home your point.

My main question, and the question we should all be asking , is this: How can we write about history or trace the evolution of the consciousness of women, without creating fictional scenes that show women as subordinate? And, if we cannot write about the reality of such rampant subordination, how then well we ever be able to change that reality?



Romance Writers' Report, May 1879

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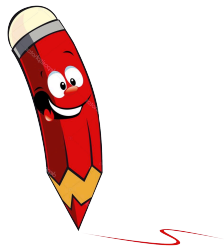


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Query & Projection

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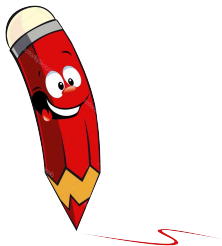


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Projection

Designed to almost “scare” the reader to action.

KIPP’s success is attracting national attention and growing financial support. Donald and Doris Fisher, founders of The Gap, are working with Feinberg to launch at least three KIPP schools this September, and as many as 200 more by decade’s end. “There’s definitely an atmosphere and urgency here,” Feinberg says.



Reader’s Digest, Feb 2001

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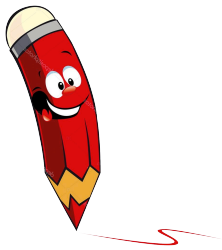


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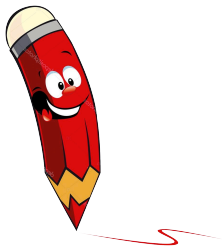


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Survey/Statistics

Use a quote and/or statistic to nail your thesis.

And in a nation where **divorce happens every 30 seconds**, his plea could not be more needful.



Christian Herald, June 1988



Scene

Being on stage can illustrate your thesis.

Christmas morning I got up plenty early. I fixed a cup of coffee, then went to get the paper. Blake heard the bolt slide and flew down the hall. He stopped dead in his tracks. “Hey, how did these get here?”

Another pile of gifts sat on the doormat. “They all say from Santa Claus,” Blake read. I looked up and down the street. No sign of anyone. “I told you!” squealed Blake. “I *told* you there was a Santa Claus!”

No, Blake, not a Santa Claus, but the love of two friends, a classroom of children, Safeway, and complete strangers...



Aglow, Nov/Dec 1986



Punch

Using forced paragraph of few words, one sentence, to challenge, underscore, restate.

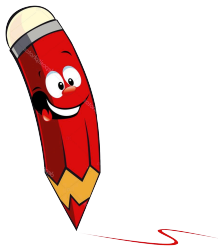
In conclusion, there is much we can do. We need not cower behind our fear of too many giants. Marching statistics and ruined lives need not intimidate us.

We can start defining our purpose...

We can then learn what these giants are...

Finally, we can draw our battle lines...

It's that simple.



Canadian Lutheran, Oct 1988

2018 © Brenda Wilbee

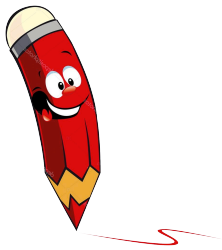


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Challenge

Take the reader beyond your thesis.

A few weeks later it was my turn to pass that comfort along. A dear friend's cheeks were still damp from the fresh grief of yet another lost baby. A new responsibility was laid before me. And I had something to give her.



Canadian Lutheran, Oct 1988

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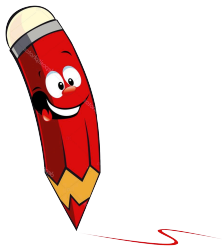


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

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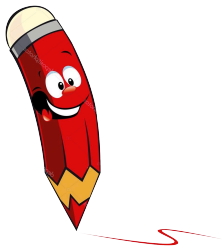


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Cliché On It's Head

Turn around cliché's and truisms.

Our parents might have taught us, “You made your bed now lie in it,” but we’re saying, **“What’s wrong with changing the sheets?”**

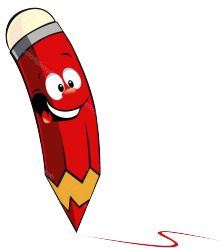


Loop

A return to the introduction in order to create a completed word picture as a satisfying frame.

Floyd awoke with a start. There was a sensation in his chest that he hadn't felt in years.... "Jean!" Floyd called out. "I can breathe deeply again!"

A few days later Jean watched in happy amazement as Floyd headed outside. "Got a few things that need doing," he said. Hopping into his pickup, he drove off to check his peanut crop.



Reader's Digest, Feb 2001

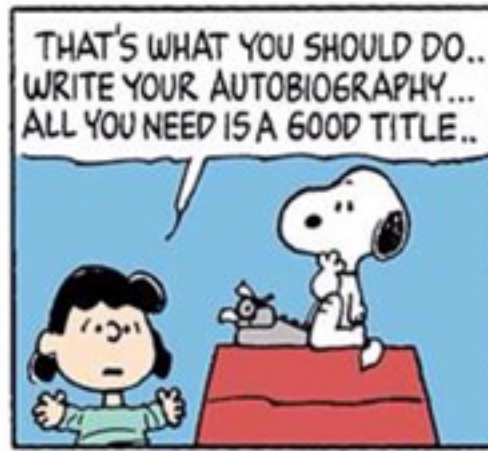
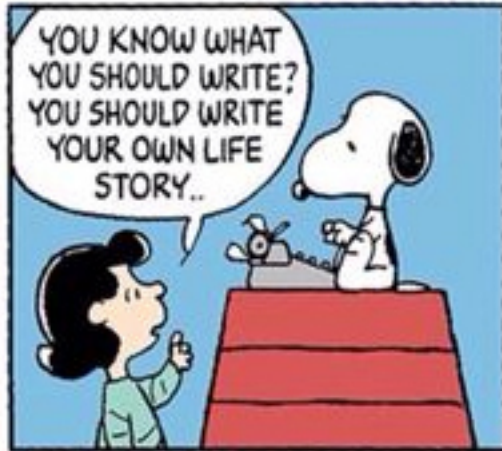
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Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It



Titles



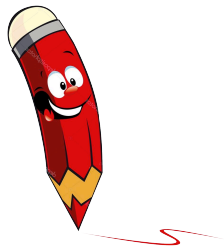
Titles



icing on the cake...

Explanation

“Breakthroughs That May Save Your Life”



Reader's Digest, Feb 2001

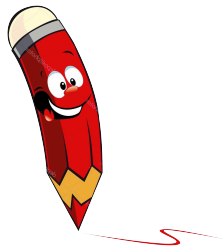
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Word Play

“Tug of Love”



Reader's Digest, March 2001

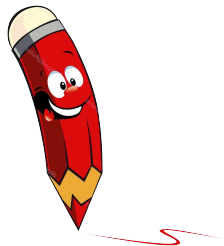
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Rhymes

“Harassed In Class”



Parents of Teenagers, Nov/Dec 1993

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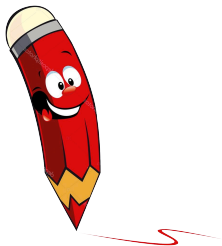


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Alliteration

“From Flyboy to Fryboy”

“Highjacked on the High Seas”



Reader's Digest, March 2001

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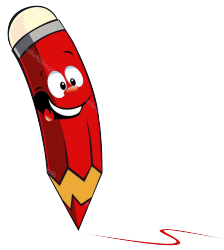


Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Thesis

Make it easy on your reader. Tell them your thesis.

“What the Gambling Industry Won’t Tell You.”



Reader's Digest, March 2001

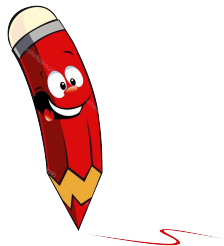
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Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Questions

“What Cracks A Marriage?”



Christian Herald, June 1998

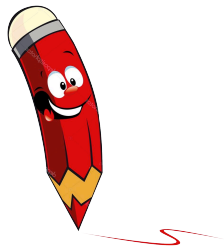
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Summary

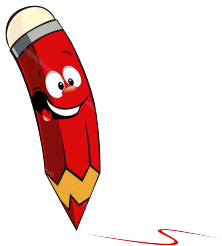
“Carl Buchan’s Gold”



Young Ambassador, Jul/Aug 1985

Statement

“Writers Will Honor Ross at Retirement Reception”



Lake WA Vocational Technical Institute

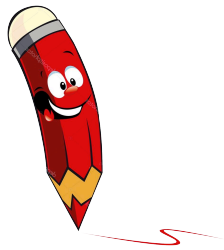
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Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It

Dramatic Statement

“I Was Stabbed in the Heart”



The Shantymen, Nov 1982

2018 © Brenda Wilbee



Creative Articles: Stop, Start, and Title It



See you next week