



*"No matter if the story opens with a laugh or a tear, the thing it must do is STIR the reader."*

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# Live Your Writing Dream

## Starting with Emotion

"A screaming comes across the sky."  
*Gravity's Rainbow* by Thomas Pynchon

"Mother died today."  
*The Stranger* by Albert Camus

"It was love at first sight."  
*Catch-22* by Joseph Heller

You can begin a story with emotion, either by showing or telling. Yes, we've all been told to show emotions for the most part, and this is one of those times where telling can work. When you start a story with emotion, you are looking to impact the reader in some way.

Try writing your story opening two ways – using showing and telling and determine which works best for your story. Get the opinions of those in your writing group and from readers. Ask the following questions:

- Which opening did you like the best? Why?
- What didn't you like about the other opening?
- Did you want to read more of the story based on the opening you liked best?
- Was there anything that might improve the opening?

No matter if the story opens with a laugh or a tear, the thing it must do is STIR the reader.

Remember that the opening can set the mood for your scene so if you decide to open with emotion, choose wisely. Also consider that the story ending should tie or relate back to your story opening. A story, often times, closes a loop with the ending. This gives the reader a sense of completeness. Make sure your emotional opening supports and enhances the end of the story.

The opening emotion can be specific or general. For example: "Thomas B. Higgins was born angry." This opening will most likely give the reader a specific set of thoughts, emotions, and might evoke specific memories related to the emotion. On the other side: "The nightmare left Julia uneasy." This emotion is not as specific as the previous example, and might raise various thoughts, emotions, and memories for the reader.

## TRY THIS!

Pick several stories you've already written and rewrite the opening to start with emotion.

Begin a new story with some emotion, based on one of the following:

- A character comes home to find the house has been robbed.
- A character sees a car accident.
- A character thinks they might be having a heart attack.
- A character is fired from his or her job.

More story openings:

"I have never begun a novel with more misgiving."

*The Razor's Edge* by W. Somerset Maugham

"He was born with a gift of laughter and a sense that the world was mad."

*Scaramouche* by Raphael Sabatini

"When Mr. Bilbo Baggins of Bag End announced that he would shortly be celebrating his eleventy-first birthday with a party of special magnificence, there was much talk and excitement in Hobbiton."  
*The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

My blog is updated every week. Check it out!

Visit: [LiveYourWritingDream.wordpress.com](http://LiveYourWritingDream.wordpress.com)

### Subplots

Starts August 30, 2010

For more information for the above workshops and to register, go to:

<http://espan-rwa.com/workshops/>

### THE Depths of POV

Starts September 6, 2010

<http://www.passionateink.org/workshops/>

For a complete list of upcoming workshops and events, go to:

<http://liveyourwritingdream.com/>

and click on Workshops for coaching and writing coming events.

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Please feel free to forward this newsletter (in its entirety) to others.

Best Wishes,  
June



# Live Your Writing Dream

*"Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going."*

~ Jim Rohn

## What is "Passive versus Active Voice"?

We hear it all the time: avoid passive voice. But do you know what this is? Unsure?

I'm teaching a workshop that starts this week on this topic and will share the quiz with you.

### QUIZ

Tell which sentences are passive voice and which are active voice.

1. I like to drive fast cars.
2. The workers get their paychecks on Fridays.
3. The movie is being shot in New York City.
4. She washed her dog.
5. Sharon's nails were done by a professional.
6. It would have been nice to know it was a surprise party ahead of time.
7. Betty introduced her husband to her new boss.
8. The teacher reads a chapter of the story every day to her students.
9. The Crown Jewels were stolen by the Midnight Cat Burglar.
10. The painting was entered into the contest.

11. Sally was chosen by Tom to be her biology lab assistant.

12. The children will be made healthy by this prescription.

Send your answers to:

[pjunediehl@liveyourwritingdream.com](mailto:pjunediehl@liveyourwritingdream.com)

with "Quiz" as the subject.

OR

Wait for the answers which will be posted in next month's newsletter.

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## What are three things that prevent you from writing?

I'm working on plans for next year's newsletter and could use your input!

What is it that keeps you from achieving your writing goals? What do you need in your life to help you finish that story or novel? Share your thoughts with me so I know what challenges you face day-to-day.

Also, if you have other ideas for the newsletter, let me know! I'm always interested in providing you information and motivation to keep you writing.

"Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars."

~ Brian Littrell

"People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing - that's why we recommend it daily."

~ Zig Ziglar

"Only as high as I reach can I grow, only as far as I seek can I go, only as deep as I look can I see, only as much as I dream can I be."

~ Karen Ravn

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