



Step 3: Tightening Tension

SEVEN STEPS WRITING TIPS

Series One

The tension scene comes just before the big climax ending. In movies this is the scene of the soccer final, the exciting car chase or the heroine fighting for her life in a raging river.

We all know Little Red Riding Hood's classic tension scene. Red RH arrives at the cottage and the wolf is in bed in granny's clothes. Red RH, (who obviously needs glasses!) says: 'Oh, grandmother, what big ears you have!'

'All the better to hear you with.'

'Oh, grandmother, what big eyes you have!'

'All the better to see you with.'

'Oh, grandmother, what big hands you have!'

'All the better to hold you with!'

'Oh, grandmother, what big teeth you have!'

'All the better to eat you with!'

See how the scene slowly builds up to be more and more dangerous - and thus frightening? We don't start with the teeth, we start with the ears - and the wolf trying to coax Red RH to come nearer and nearer.

TOP TIP:

Emotion always takes time to build up. So in tension scenes, show kids how to start small and 'escalate' to a powerful climax.



ACTION ACTIVITY:

Read picture books with your kids and look for the tension scenes. Picture books are short, so it's easy to find where the all-important tension builds before the ending.


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