

Hooks for On-Demand Essays

- **Open with an anecdote or scenario:**

My hands felt sticky after pulling open the doors to “Big Bobby’s Boisterous Burger Hut.” The odor smelled of fried everything. I ordered a Big Bobby Combo #2. There was enough food to serve a small third world country on my tray. I nibbled at the quarter-pound burger and my chin was covered in a mayonnaise and ketchup concoction. I asked the server if I could have a few fries with my salt. I left the place feeling like my stomach was mad at me.

- **Open with an interesting question:**

How many times have you eaten fast food this month?

- **Open with an outrageous statement or hyperbole:**

Fast food is killing America!

Hooks for On-Demand Stories

- **Open with dialogue:**

“Does it hurt?”

“Well, the pain is constantly there, but my body is numb.”

“Why do you think she did it?”

“I have no idea; I don’t think that even she knows what provoked her.”

- **Open with action:**

I am running. That’s the first thing I remember. Running. I carry something, my arm curled around it, hugging it to my chest. Bread, of course. Someone is chasing me. “Stop! Thief!”

- **Open with vivid sensory detail:**

I don’t know why running through a redwood forest has always made me think of death. It’s not because I grew up in a mill town—I don’t run between the trees seeing five hundred—foot—tall piles of sawdust or neatly stacked lumber or endless reams of paper. And it’s not because of the darkness where the old growth is thickest, although as I pounded along the narrow forest trail, the massive trees pressed in against each other in the twilight, and the smell of the wood and leaves was damp and lightly sweet and faintly bloodlike.

Hook Practice: Literary Analysis

1. The main character has a different mood in both stories. Write an essay that describes how her/his mood affects her/his actions.
2. The main character's actions are important to both stories. Write an essay that describes her/his actions. How are they similar and different? Describe why they are important.
3. Write an essay that describes how the settings of both stories are similar and different.

Hook Practice: Research Simulation

1. Based on the information from the essays, explain whether caffeine is helpful or harmful.
2. Consider the background of each author. Write an essay comparing and contrasting how the life experiences of the three authors influenced how each text was written. Explain the purpose of each author for writing. Include a detailed description of the authors' techniques to convey the point of the text.
3. Write an essay that examines the purpose of each president's speech. Consider the specific goals and claims he presents and develops to persuade his audience that the goals are important and possible to achieve.

Hook Practice: Narrative

1. *The boy looked around the mall anxiously. He wouldn't cry. He was a big boy, and big boys didn't cry. His mommy would find him. His big blue eyes scanned the crowd of people searching for his mom. Where could she have gone?*

Continue the story, written as a scene in a play.

2. *In an emergency, Jacob is left to stay with his grandfather for several days. His grandfather pretends to be annoyed at the inconvenience, but, secretly, he is delighted. He adores the boy. However, his grandfather is embarrassed about displaying emotion, so he acts gruff with the child, who is therefore frightened of him at the beginning of the visit.*

Rewrite the story in 1st person point of view as told by Jacob.

3. *Everything is fine. I'm doing all right. I'm doing nicely. I know my way back to the base. I'll be there in half an hour. When I land, I shall taxi in and switch off my engine and I shall say, "Help me to get out, will you?" I shall make my voice sound ordinary and natural and none of them will take any notice. Then I shall say, "Someone help me to get out. I can't do it alone, because in battle earlier today, I lost one of my legs."*

Tell the story of the memory/incident mentioned in the excerpt from the story.