

A Glossary of Good Beginnings

- 1. Interesting description.** Ashes filled the air when I was around the camp fire. Crackle, crackle it went.
- 2. Sound.** Boom! The trunk slammed. Bang! The car doors slammed as we got out of the van.
- 3. The past in the present.** It is April 10, 1912. The Titanic is going to travel all the way from England to America.
- 4. Exclamation.** Yeah! We're going to Disneyland tomorrow! Yeah!" I yelled about as loud as I could.
- 5. A thought.** I'm in big trouble now, I thought to myself.
- 6. A complaint.** It seems like we never go swimming at Fife pool!
- 7. A surprise.** Wow! I was doing my back hand-spring and I landed it!
- 8. A question.** Have you ever been an Editor-in-Chief? Well I'll tell you, it's a big job!
- 9. Sound, repetition, and simile.** Screech, screech, screech! The first time we tried to play the recorders it sounded like a lion running his claws down a chalkboard.
- 10. Exclamation, repetition, strong feelings.** Chores! Chores! Chores! Chores are boring! Scrubbing toilets, cleaning sinks, and washing bathtubs take up a lot of my time and are not fun at all.
- 11. Extremely strong feelings.** The very first time I saw asparagus I hated it. I had never even tried it before and I still hated it!
- 12. A series of questions.** Touch of the flu? Egg in her hair? Poor Ramona!
- 13. Scary, exciting, or intense moment.** . . . I tried to run, but I couldn't. The monster seemed like it was growing by the minute! And then, the most horrible thing was about to happen — I screamed and sat bolt upright in bed. I gasped swallowing huge amounts of air.
- 14. Main idea.** I will always love my grandparents' beach house. The way the waves role over the gooey sand and the way the sand weaves in between your toes. The way we pick up barnacle-covered rocks and watch the sand crabs scurry away. The way we dig for clams and end up knee deep in the never ending sand.
- 15. Something interesting to come.** It all started on an average day. I didn't think anything unusual was going to happen, but boy was I wrong!
- 16. Conversation.** "We're moving." That's what she told me. I couldn't believe it! I had just made the basketball team and was making more friends. "What!" I exclaimed.
- 17. Reveal something unusual.** "Company halt!" yelled the drill master. My mom stopped and went into position. Her dog tags clinked as she moved.
- 18. An unsettling description.** A flash of lightning illuminates the harsh emptiness of the night. In an orphanage children cry mournfully. They are starving.
- 19. Unusual image of a character.** Simon Wilken was snacking down on a plum with great gusto.
- 20. Anecdote.** On a dark December night in 1776, as he led a barefoot brigade of ragged revolutionaries across the icy Delaware River, George Washington said, "Shift your fat behind, Harry. But slowly or you'll swamp the dam boat."
- 21. Describe the setting.** The deafening crowd was packed into the Kingdome on the sold-out Buhner Buzz-Cut Night. Hundreds of people were outfitted in brand new buzz-cuts and were enjoying the Mariner game.
- 22. Address the audience.** You walk into the dentist's office. You sit down. You try to read a magazine. But it's no use. You're scared and there's nothing you can do about it.
- 23. "Show" feelings.** I sat in my desk, sweat dripping down my face. I shut my eyes tight, then opened them. I looked at my watch, 11:27. Three minutes! Three minutes until I heard a sound, a sound that would set me free for three months of total nothingness.
- 24. Comic story.** "Oh my God!" I exclaimed, "What's John doing out there? Why is he on his hands and knees, Mom?" I looked out the big kitchen window wondering if my eight-year old brother was all right. He was looking distressed. Then he threw up.
- 25. Challenge the reader.** Colin Greer, the President of the New World Foundation, a civil rights organization in New York, has something to say about your character.
- 26. Focus on something important.** In my old, battered, black wallet I carry many things. A letter from a friend. My lunch ticket. My social security card. Many other tidbits and items as well. There is one thing however, which I prize above all my possessions. It is a photograph.
- 27. A list.** The sweat on your brow. A layer of dust on your face. Out in the woods. Somewhere. And on a horse. Of all the places in the world, I feel best on a horse.
- 28. A scenario.** Right now I want you to pretend you are in a store. As you walk around, you see that some products are much more inexpensive. Now, look at the labels on these cheaper items. You will probably notice that many of these labels say, "Made in China," or "Made in Honduras." Have you ever stopped to wonder why products made in these countries are so much more affordable than the things manufactured right here on American soil?
- 29. Fantasy or fairy tale-type language.** In yesteryear, when Moby Dick was just a tadpole, and the seas rolled and thundered over the jetties and onto the shore, I searched for my first sand dollar still hidden somewhere in the ever stretching Long Beach Peninsula.
- 30. Simple action to complex realization.** I walk up the hill with my friends, then turn into our cul-de-sac, go to the front door, put the key in the lock, turn, and step in. The house breathes a kind of spooky hello as I set my books down and go to the kitchen where the inevitable note is waiting: "Have a snack. Be home soon. I love you."
- 31. Startling statement.** A great crime was committed against a people in 1942. This was the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, which called for the eviction and interment of all Japanese Americans.
- 32. Thesis.** Education is a key element in developing the skills necessary for a successful life. Too often, students are more involved earning a paycheck than spending time on their academic studies. Students need to realize that their high school classes will prepare them for a brighter future.
- 33. Something outlandish.** I am a dynamic figure, often seen scaling walls and crushing ice. I have been known to remodel train stations on my lunch breaks, making them more efficient in the area of heat retention. I write award-winning operas. I manage time efficiently. Occasionally, I tread water for three days in a row.
- 34. Fast action.** I raced inside, slamming the front door behind me. I plopped my backpack on the floor and dashed for the kitchen. Our cat, asleep in the hallway, quickly awoke and scurried out of harms way. I knew I only had a few precious seconds before my brother, coming in through the back door, beat me to the kitchen and nabbed the last of mom's brownies.
- 35. A saying.** It was Ralph Waldo Emerson who said that "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of simple minds." He said it almost 200 years ago, but perhaps it bears repeating today to our senators and congressman who act as though our country can continue to spend money it does not have.

A Glossary of Happy Endings

- 1. Advice.** (A) If you cannot swallow and your throat is puffy, then you have strep. You should get lots of rest. And get a shot because the shot will make you better faster than the medicine. (B) If you're thinking about going skydiving, take my advice: stop thinking.
- 2. Big feeling.** (A) Oh Yeah! Here is some thing really funny. My hair still smells like smoke. I love campfires. (B) Finally the parade was done. We put the blanket in the trunk. Boom! It slammed again and we drove away as I thought how much fun I had. (C) When it's time to go, none of us wants to leave. As I say my good-byes, I think of all the fun we had, and what fun we will have next time.
- 3. Remember.** (A) Remember, even though the Mariners are losing doesn't mean they're a bad team. (B) So always remember to keep an extra key somewhere. You never know when you might need it.
- 4. Do.** (A) There were 300 families with no homes because of the fire. They couldn't put out the fire because they had no sprinklers. I am mad because fires can kill people. Next time buy some sprinklers. (B) Down with the dolls! Get rid of every store that carries them! Let the revolution for a Barbie-free America begin! (C) If you care about the lives of your children and the quality of your community, then vote for tomorrow's school levy. It's the best way to guarantee a bright future for everyone. (D) Make a commitment to getting in shape today. Turn off the television, put down whatever it is you're reading (unless it's this essay, of course), start living a healthy life today. You'll be glad you did.
- 5. Future.** (A) Last year was definitely the hardest, craziest year of my life. And I loved it! Things are going great. I never knew the incredible feeling of accomplishing things that in the past seemed impossible—not only with school, but with my entire life. Every day is another chance to do something great. And now I have the confidence and motivation to conquer anything that is put forth in front of me. I feel I owe this to many things and to many people, but most of all I owe it to myself. Now I think about the consequences of everything I do and say. And this helps me make better decisions, decisions that help me build a better future. The future! For the first time I'm looking forward to it. (B) Everybody's always talking about adults being good role models for kids, but maybe we should be models for them. Maybe we could teach them a few things about how to have a good time and enjoy life. It's worth a try. I'd hate to think that the way growing up seems to me now is the way it's going to be when I get there.
- 6. Lesson.** (A) I learned that I shouldn't lie because it gets me into worse trouble. In the future I'm not going to lie. If I have a problem, I'm going to tell someone about it, and ask for help. (B) From the wars in Korea and Vietnam, our country learned painful but valuable lessons that will guide our foreign policy well into the next century and beyond.
- 7. Recommendation.** (A) I recommend this book for readers who like adventures and interesting stories. (B) Even after all the bad things that happened, it was still a fun trip. If you go there, I can't guarantee you won't have all the problems we did. But I can recommend this vacation to any family who wants a real challenge. (C) Even though the food was pretty good and it wasn't too expensive, I'm afraid I can't recommend this restaurant to everyone. It was very noisy and the service was slow. I don't think it would be a good choice for families with small children.
- 8. Main idea.** (A) Chores aren't the worst but they're definitely not the best! (B) An actor acts. A hero helps. The actor becomes famous and the hero does not. And that's just it: Heroes don't care about the credit, they just care.
- 9. Main idea and implications.** (A) Henry Ford's revolutionary thinking affected the lives of many Americans. The Ford Motor Company became one of the largest industrial companies in the world, and a household name. Opportunity to be mobile in a Ford automobile gave the open road to the ordinary American. Businesses boomed in the hard times of the Depression because the auto gave the opportunity for work to many. The American dream of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness was more possible in the auto. Americans today still have a love affair with cars thanks to Henry Ford and his revolutionary thinking.
- 10. Effect.** (A) While all this happened, another close neighbor had witnessed the incident and called 911. It was decided afterward that the dog had contracted rabies and he was soon put to sleep. I was given a series of shots and a few stitches only, and after a couple of years, my leg healed, but the scars remain on both the inside and out. (B) The internment of the Japanese Americans was one of the lowest points in United States history. We did it out of revenge and out of hate. The fear that we felt after the attack at Pearl Harbor was well founded, but the internment was not the way to overcome it. The internment hurt so many people so deeply and really accomplished nothing in the short run. In the long run, it brought nothing but shame upon us.
- 11. Question.** (A) As this miracle season comes to a close, the one thing on every fan's mind is this: "Can they do it again next year?" (B) Will the human race ever see the irony in destroying the planet that is their only home? How much more evidence do we need before we take global warming seriously? (C) I guess what still bothers me is how confused I am about what happened. If I was ever in that same situation again, would I act the same way, or would I do something different?
- 12. Sequel.** (A) As soon as I walked in the dining room I smelled trouble. I looked down at my plate and saw what I smelled! Brussels sprouts! I gave a loud tragic moan and knew there was going to be another story written by Alex Carter. But for now, I would feed my Brussels sprouts to the fish. (B) And so ends another after school adventure, or misadventure, I should say. Stay tuned for the further misadventures of a kid with not enough homework to keep him out of trouble and way too many wild ideas.
- 13. Reflective evaluation.** (A) So I guess that I lived happily ever after except that I couldn't walk for the rest of the trip. Maybe that camp ground wasn't so cool after all. (B) From that point on my life has been good. Except for the chores. I think my mom got the better end of the deal on that one. (C) BRRRIIINNGGG! The bell rang! I pulled on my backpack, tore out of the room, sprinted down the stairs, sped down the hallway, and bounded out the door. I dashed home and grabbed a snack. I popped a video into the VCR, turned on the TV, and relaxed. Ah-hhhhh! What a glorious day! (D) My whole world seems to be more on track now that she's gone. My self-confidence, my general attitude has improved immensely. I do miss her sometimes. How could I not after three years of friendship? All I can think is that I was a good friend to her. Our relationship didn't survive, but we'll always have the laughs... and the tears.
- 14. Wish, hope, dream.** (A) Now, I'm looking at John, over the mess on the kitchen table, wondering if he's all right, because he's only eight years old, and that was a lot of throwing up to do. Then he gets to go out and play with his friend, just like he wanted. I feel a little cheated. Would I have gotten to go back out if that was me? I really wish he could have the experience of a younger sibling, just so he would know how I feel. (B) I hope someday that I can be a good parent just like my mom. But until then, I'll just work on being a good kid. (C) Even now, years later, I still dream of what my life might have been like. (D) I think that Jay Buhner is a true hero. The Seattle Mariners would be lacking an excellent right fielder without him. I hope he stays in Seattle for the rest of his baseball career.
- 15. Tribute.** (A) I salute you, Lieutenant John Olson. May your bravery and courage be passed on so that someone else may look up to you and yours, and honor them as I do. (B) John was the best kid I ever knew. There when I need him, gone when he knew I needed to be alone. And I feel damn privileged of having the extreme honor of being his blood-brother. I just wish we could have carted him along when we moved here to Canby. God bless his soul. I'm never going to forget him.
- 16. Wrap-around.** (A) Boom! The trunk slammed. Bang! The car door slammed as we got out of the van. ... We put the blanket in the trunk. Boom! It slammed again and we drove away as I thought how much fun I had.