**Ending Stories**

**Writers draft many possible endings to their stories in order to leave their readers with something big at the end. They think about what they want to say about the character’s journey.**

**Let’s revisit the story about Luka.**

**What is this story REALLY about? The story is about the writer’s relationship with her sister.**

**What message does the writer want to leave with his/her readers? Throughout her life, the writer’s sister has been a constant source of support.**

**Does the ending REALLY SHOW the writer’s message to the reader? No. The current ending is sudden and disappointing.**

*“Luka!” I yelled as he ran into my legs. “Silly dog!” I huffed. He had too much energy for his own good. He looked up cheerfully, tongue hanging recklessly out of the side of his mouth. Then he bounded down the field, all his muscles rippling. “Why do I have to take him for his walks?” I grouched silently, shivering in the cold wind, and thinking of my warm bed.*

*It was then that I heard the sounds. There was a screech, a thud and a whine so full of pain that my heart stopped beating.*

*“What . . . Where . . . Where’s Luka?” I didn’t know my older sister was running through the field behind me until I heard her panic-filled voice.*

*I turned to look at her but found I couldn’t answer, only shake my head. Together we ran until we were beside the furry body that had curled into itself, now heaving gently.*

*“Luka?” I heard my voice break as I knelt beside him. His eyes had never looked like this, glazed with shock, as if he couldn’t see me at all. My sister, too, was talking – softly. Her face as she bent close to Luka was white. “It’s okay . . . It’s okay . . . It’s going to be okay,” she murmured. Her hand came up to hold my shoulder and I realized it was me, not Luka, that she was trying to comfort.*

*Later, I took off my warm jacket and wrapped his stiffening body in it and together, my sister and I carried him back across the field that he had run through so joyfully that morning. I stopped near one of the big rocks that Luka and I had often sat on. My sister looked at me in confusion. “Here,” I told her simply, gesturing to the ground beside the rocks. She didn’t ask me any questions, just nodded and mumbled, “I’ll get the shovel.”*

*As she walked off, my mind drifted back to the time we’d first seen Luka at the shelter – how he’d pushed his wet nose through the cage, into my small hand. Still too little for sentences then, I had just smiled and said, “Doggie.” It was my sister who’d called out, “Hey dad, we found the one.”*

*The sound of shoveling snapped me out of my thoughts. My sister was bent over the spot I’d indicated, digging a hole. I reached out and hugged her from behind. I could feel her body shake. “Thank you,” I mumbled into her ear, as we cried together.*

**Current Ending – This ending does not show the reader just how grateful the writer was that her big sister was there at that moment. It is sudden and disappointing.**

**Revised Ending – This ending shows the reader how supportive the writer’s sister was, even when she exposed something unkind about herself.**

*The sound of shoveling snapped me out of my thoughts. My sister was bent over the spot I’d indicated, digging a hole. I reached out and hugged her from behind. I could feel her body shake. “Thanks,” I mumbled into her ear. She reached up and put her hand over mine and I could feel, again, how she was trying to comfort me, even as she cried. “I wasn’t very nice to Luka this morning,” I confessed. Tears of shame stung my eyes. Suddenly, my sister had me in a tight hug. “It’s okay,” she murmured into my hair. “Luka knew you loved him.”*

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ September 26, 2016

Ending Stories

**Remember, don’t simply end your story! Resolve problems, teach lessons, or make changes that tie back to the big meaning of your story.**

**What is my story REALLY about? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**What message do I want to leave with my readers? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Here are a few different ways my ending might go (try at least 3 different ways):**

**Ending 1:**

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**Ending 2:**

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**Ending 3:**

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