

Takeaway Endings

Name _____ Date _____

When you begin writing a story, it's good to capture the reader's attention right away. But did you know the way we *end* a piece of writing is as important as the way we start one? A good writer sums up his narrative story with a great ending, sometimes called a takeaway. **A takeaway is one or two sentences that tell the reader what the main character learned, or how his life has changed.**

For example:

"I'll never forget this place as long as I live," Addie said.
 "Things change," she thought. "Change isn't so bad after all."
takeaway ending

Another example:

As Buddy said good-bye to his friends he realized that this
 summer at Camp Kippy was one of the best summers of his life.
takeaway ending

You've seen **takeaways** at the end of television programs such as *The Waltons*, *The Wonder Years*, or *Anne of Green Gables*. You've seen them at the end of movies like *Home Alone* or *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. You've read takeaway endings at the end of favorite chapter books and stories. They're everywhere!


The short story below is about a dog who runs away from home and gets into trouble. Notice how the takeaway ending tells how Buddy's life has changed.

Buddy lived in the backyard behind Pete's house. One day, when Pete left for school, Buddy dug a hole under the fence and crawled under. He had never been out in the neighborhood without Pete before. I'll explore, Buddy thought, and off he went, running wild.



When Buddy tried to cross the street to get to the park, a car had to screech to a stop, almost hitting the little dog. In the park, he ran into a couple of mean boys who yelled and threw rocks at him. After a while, it started to rain, and Buddy was soaked to the skin. I miss Pete, he thought. His ears dripped and his tail drooped.

Buddy walked home in the rain, dripping wet and lonely. Why had he gone out without his friend, Pete? Just as Buddy arrived home, Pete got off the school bus. "What are you doing out of the fence?" Pete asked. He hugged his little dog. Buddy wagged his tail furiously.

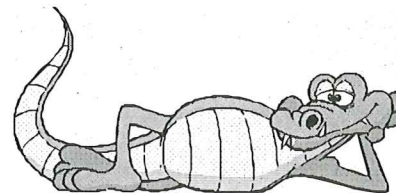
An adventure is best, Buddy thought, when you can share it with a friend like Pete.
takeaway 

Examples of Takeaway Endings

Name _____ Date _____

Takeaway endings are little “diamonds” that tell us what the main character learned, or how his life changed. Here are some examples of takeaway endings for you to refer to:

1. My close call with a giant alligator has certainly taught me not to dangle my feet in the water while canoeing.



2. After spending that cold, lonely night in the woods, I'll never disobey my father's warnings again.

3. Getting that little puppy for my birthday has changed my life. I now have a lifelong friend who loves me, just for being me.

4. You can be sure that I won't be playing around lawn mowers after my long day in the Emergency Room.

5. Watching TV is okay, but reading a good mystery really gets my heart pumping.

6. You better be careful the next time you're tempted to sneak outside at night. You might run into trouble!

7. Uncle Henry taught me more about playing checkers in one afternoon than I had learned my entire life. I hope that when I grow up I can teach my own nephew how to play championship checkers.

8. Now I know, even an alien from outer space needs a friend!

9. I'll never forget playing in the championship soccer match, even though we lost. I was happy just to be there with the rest of the team.

10. My sister and I become best friends the day we built the giant sand castle together.

11. We lost Grandpa that summer, and my life will never be the same. How could one man have taught us all so much?