



JANICE THOMPSON, AUTHOR

# Seven Secrets to Creating the Perfect Ending

 0 Comments

There's nothing worse than a book with an unsatisfying ending. The reader deserves a solid wrap-up. Otherwise, he'll feel cheated. (After all, he plowed through 300+ pages of your book assuming the ending would leave him satisfied!)

Knowing how and when to conclude your story is key. It's also an art form. With that in mind, I've come up with seven secrets (Shh! Don't tell!) to give your story a terrific

ending.



## 1. Bring it Full-Circle

Many great stories circle back around in the end (bringing the reader back to an issue or character they met in the opening scene). This is a tidy way to wrap things up. If your story starts out in the present, then shifts backward to the past, consider bringing it into the present to conclude the tale.

## 2. All's Fair in Love and War

There's just no other way to say it: You've got to play fair with the reader. She's looking for a proper resolution, not some sort of miraculous "And they all lived happily ever after" line to summarize the end of your story. As you craft your resolution, do so in a believable, realistic way. Otherwise the reader will feel cheated. It takes a lot more talent (and time) to play fair. . .but it's worth it.

### **3. The "Aw" Factor**

Many memorable books end with the "aw" factor, something that genuinely touches the reader where he lives. If you do this right, he closes the book feeling warm and fuzzy on the inside.

### **4. Let's Do the Twist**

A twisted ending can be a lot of fun, particularly in a cozy mystery. However, that said, you have to play fair. The twist has to be completely believable and you must have planted seeds earlier in the story so that the twist 'works' in the end.

### **5. The Climactic Ending**

A cliffhanger ending can be a heart-stopping way to end a book. Suspend the resolution until the very last minute for the best possible gasp from the reader.

### **6. Hook 'em**

If you're writing a series of books consider an open-ended approach. Use the last chapter of your book as a hook for the next story in the collection. Again, you have to play fair. The reader doesn't want to feel like he wasted his money buying a book that doesn't offer him a resolution. So, resolve the story, but leave a few unanswered questions—just enough to make him buy the next book!

### **7. Offer a nugget of truth.**

Whether you realize it or not, every book out there teaches some sort of lesson or provokes the reader to think about things differently. Make sure your takeaway value is there, but don't slam the reader over the head with your message. Less is more,

particularly in fiction.

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That's it, writers. We've spent the last several pages looking at ways to amp up the conflict and lay out the perfect plotline. Wrapping up those stories in believable, timely, effective ways will make your readers clamor for more!

**By JThompson**  
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**Fiction Lessons**

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## Common Fiction Mistakes →

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