**Great Leads**

**These beginnings to novels demonstrate how setting, action, character, reflection, event, or dialogue can lead you into a story:**

**Avi. *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle.*** .

"Not every thirteen-year-old girl is accused of murder, brought to trial, and found guilty. But I was just such a girl, and my story is worth relating even if it did happen years ago."

**Blume, Judy. *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret.***

"Are you there God? It's me, Margaret. We're moving today. I'm so scared God. I've never lived anywhere but here. Suppose I hate my new school? Suppose everybody there hates me? Please help me God. Don't let New Jersey be too horrible. Thank you."

**Howe, James. *The Misfits*.**

“So here I am, not a half-hour old as a tie salesman and trying to look like I know what I was doing, which have got to be two of the biggest jokes of all time, when who should walk into Awkworth & Ames Department Store but Skeezie Tookis.”

**Juster, Norton. *The Phantom Tollbooth***

 “There was a boy named Milo who didn't know what to do with himself – not just sometimes, but always.”

**L'Engle, Madeline. *A Wrinkle In Time***

 “It was a dark and stormy night.”

**Lowry, Lois. *The Giver*.**

“It was almost December, and Jonas was beginning to be frightened. No. Wrong word, Jonas thought. Frightened meant that deep, sickening feeling of something terrible about to happen.”

**Philbrick, Rodman. *Freak the Mighty*.**

“I never had a brain until Freak came along and let me borrow his for

awhile, and that’s the truth, the whole truth. The unvanquished truth is how Freak would say it…”

Compare with:

In the picture there is a boy.

I’m going to describe the picture with the earthquake.

The women is old.

Three Edward Bulwer Lytton Worst Lead Sentence Contest Winners

#### "Ace, watch your head!" hissed Wanda urgently, yet somehow provocatively, through red, full, sensuous lips, but he couldn't you know, since nobody can actually watch more than part of his nose or a little cheek or lips if he really tries, but he appreciated her warning.

#### --Janice Estey, Aspen, Colorado (1996 Winner)

#### On reflection, Angela perceived that her relationship with Tom had always been rocky, not quite a roller-coaster ride but more like when the toilet-paper roll gets a little squashed so it hangs crooked and every time you pull some off you can hear the rest going bumpity-bumpity in its holder until you go nuts and push it back into shape, a degree of annoyance that Angela had now almost attained.

#### Rephah Berg, Oakland CA (2002 Winner)

#### They had but one last remaining night together, so they embraced each other as tightly as that two-flavor entwined string cheese that is orange and yellowish-white, the orange probably being a bland Cheddar and the white . . . Mozzarella, although it could possibly be Provolone or just plain American, as it really doesn't taste distinctly dissimilar from the orange, yet they would have you believe it does by coloring it differently.

#### Mariann Simms, Wetumpka, AL (2003 Winner)