

## 6+1 Writing Traits

# Types of Endings

No matter what you call them, they are designed to leave the reader with a sense of resolution and a lasting impression — and the feeling that the time spent reading your words was a good investment. Depending on the specific piece of writing, it may even mean that the reader comes away with a desire to take some kind of action. Please note, however, that “a sense of resolution” does not mean the problem or issue itself has been solved. Here is a list of lead types drawn from a number of sources.

### Non-Fiction Endings

**Summary:** rounds up the piece’s main points

**Call-back:** refers back to the lead as a reminder of the main point stated at the beginning

**Thematic Reprise:** reflects on the piece’s meaning and provides the take-away message

**Encouraging Message:** concludes with a “pep talk,” making the reader feel optimistic

**Quotation:** concludes with a direct statement that sums up the piece’s main message or theme

**Ta-da!** uses a grand statement that provides the reader with closure: licks the envelope

**Challenge:** challenges the reader to take action

**Cause and Effect:** state how the reader is affected

### Fiction Endings

**Epiphany:** wraps up the story with a sudden insight by the character

**Moral:** reveals a lesson for the reader

**Image:** provides a visual connection to a key point in the story

**Irony:** notes the incongruity between what the character says and does and how the story turns out

**Tragedy:** ends on a dark note, prompting the reader to consider how the final events reveal the theme

**Surprise:** ends with an unexpected turn of events

**Hollywood Ending:** provides the perfect ending, in which everything works out just fine

### A Few More

**Profound Thought:** based on common knowledge taken to a new level

**Question or Open-ended Statement:** leaves the reader unsure, unsettled

**Literary Device:** such as a metaphor that has been built up in the story

**Laugh:** leave the reader smiling

**Emotional Statement:** provoke the reader to react emotionally

And, yes, it is possible to combine the characteristics of two or three endings to create something even more interesting. The point is this: Get creative — do not be afraid to experiment. Edison failed more than a thousand times before he invented the light bulb!