

小故事里的三个坑：道具、波折和结尾

用一支红笔、一把尺子、一块橡皮这类道具写小故事，写出来常常不对味。问题一般出在三个地方，每个都给了自查问题。

第一个坑：道具中途失踪。开头写红笔，中间写老师辛苦，结尾写感谢老师，红笔改完第一段就再没出现。道具是线索，线索断了，故事就散成三段话。自查问题：道具在结尾有没有最后一次出场？修法很简单：让道具在结尾做一个动作。红笔在最后一页画对勾，就是道具回收。道具出场至少三次：开头登场、中间干活、结尾收线。

第二个坑：经过是一条直线。红笔没水了，老师买了新的，继续批改——三句话讲完，没有波折。直线故事不好看，因为读者猜得到每一步。修法是在中间加一次失败：老师先用蓝笔凑合，发现蓝笔批注看不清，才去买红笔芯。一次失败就是一次波折，波折的标准是读者猜不到下一步。波折不用大，一次就够，两次最好。

第三个坑：结尾喊口号。故事讲完，最后一段突然写老师这种认真负责的精神值得我们学习。前面攒的画面感一下子泄光了。自查问题：结尾一段有没有出现新画面？如果只有评价，就是口号。修法是把结尾换成一个小变化：从那以后，交本子前孩子们都会翻一下最后一页。变化本身就是赞美，不用作者站出来夸。

顺带两个小毛病。一是形容词太多：非常认真、特别负责这类词，删掉换成动作——把蓝笔批过的两本重新用红笔过一遍，这个动作比非常认真响得多。二是时间不清楚：小故事要有时间锚，周三下午、放学铃、七点半，读者跟着时间走，故事才有真实感。

改完通读一遍，拿三把尺子量：道具回来没有，中间绊了一下没有，结尾有没有画面。三把都过，这篇小故事就不用再改了。

Three Traps in a Little Story: Prop, Turns, and Ending

Little stories built on a prop — a red pen, a ruler, an eraser — often come out wrong. The trouble usually sits in three places, each with a self-check question.

The first trap: the prop disappears midway. The opening introduces the red pen, the middle talks about the teacher's hard work, the ending thanks the teacher, and the red pen never returns after paragraph one. A prop is a thread; when the thread snaps, the story falls apart into three separate paragraphs. Check: does the prop make a final appearance at the end? The fix is simple — let the prop act one last time. The red pen drawing a check on the last page is the prop coming home. A prop should appear at least three times: entering at the start, working in the middle, closing the line at the end.

The second trap: the middle is a straight line. The pen runs dry, the teacher buys a new one, grading continues — three sentences, no turns. A straight-line story is dull because the reader guesses every step. The fix is to add one failure in the

middle: the teacher first makes do with a blue pen, discovers the blue marks are unreadable, and only then goes to buy red refills. One failure is one turn, and the test for a turn is that the reader cannot predict the next step. It need not be big; one turn is enough, two is best.

The third trap: the ending shouts a slogan. After the story, the last paragraph suddenly says the teacher's earnest, responsible spirit is worth learning from. Everything the scenes built drains away at once. Check: does the final paragraph contain a new image? If it contains only judgment, it is a slogan. The fix is to replace the ending with a small change: from then on, the children flip the last page before handing in their books. The change itself is the praise; the author need not step forward to applaud.

Two minor faults along the way. First, too many adjectives: phrases like very earnest and especially responsible should be deleted and replaced with action — re-grading the two blue-marked books in red says very earnest far louder. Second, unclear time: a little story needs time anchors — Wednesday afternoon, the dismissal bell, half past seven. Readers walk through time, and the story gains a feel of real life.

After revising, read the whole thing once and measure it with three rulers: did the prop come back, did the middle trip once, is there an image at the end? Pass all three, and the story needs no more edits.