

借东西故事的五个坑：对照这份自查清单改

第一个坑：忘记写得太笼统。症状是全文只有一句后来我把铅笔忘了，中间全是空白。读者会问，一天都没还吗，为什么一直没还。改法是把一次忘记拆成三次没还成，每次给一个具体原因，放学被留下、上课铃响、校服进洗衣机，任选两个组合。忘记是攒出来的，不是宣布出来的。

第二个坑：多年后归还没有场合。症状是突然写三年后我把铅笔还给了她，像从时间隧道里掉出来的。归还需要一个触发物：整理笔袋、大扫除、翻旧书包、搬家拆纸箱。让铅笔先被重新发现，再去找人，顺序对了，多年后三个字才有着落。

第三个坑：时间跨度没有证据。症状是故事里只写了三年两个字，铅笔从头到尾一模一样。检查线索物的变化：笔杆的漆掉了没有，胶布卷边没有，笔尖用秃过没有，笔袋换过没有。挑两处写进故事，读者自己就能算出时间过了多久，比你写三年有效。

第四个坑：结尾喊口号。症状是最后一句我一定要做一个诚实守信的孩子。这种句子一出现，故事立刻变味。改法是让结尾停在一个动作或一句对话上：她把铅笔接过去，插回笔袋最上层；或者她说还记得啊，我说一直都留着。口号删掉，道理留给读的人自己想。

第五个坑：三个情节各写各的，没有线索物贯穿。症状是把铅笔换成橡皮、换成钱，故事一个字不用改。这说明铅笔只是道具，不是线索。改法是给铅笔安排三次出场：借的时候看清它的特征，留下的时候写它的变化，归还的时候让它被认出来。认出来的那一刻，最好有个证据，名字、胶布、缺口都行，物证让故事闭环。

五个坑按顺序查一遍：忘记拆没拆成具体事件，归还有没有触发场合，时间有没有物证，结尾是不是停在动作或对话上，铅笔有没有三次出场。哪一条对不上就改哪一条，改完再读一遍，删掉删了也不影响情节的句子。这份清单同样适用于借书、借雨伞、借零花钱的所有借还故事，换个道具，五个坑一个都不会变。

Five Traps in Borrow-and-Return Stories: Fix Your Draft With This Checklist

Trap one: forgetting is written too vaguely. The symptom is a single line, I forgot about the pencil later, with a blank where the middle should be. Readers will ask, not even one day? why was it never returned? The fix is to split one forgetting into three failed returns, each with a concrete reason: kept back after school, the class bell ringing, the uniform going into the washing machine, pick any two and combine them. Forgetting accumulates; it is not announced.

Trap two: the return years later has no setting. The symptom is a sudden I gave her the pencil back three years later, as if it fell out of a time tunnel. A return needs a trigger object: tidying a pouch, spring cleaning, emptying an old school bag, unpacking moving boxes. Let the pencil be rediscovered first, then go find the person; get the order right, and the words years later finally have ground under

them.

Trap three: the time span has no evidence. The symptom is that the story only writes the words three years, while the pencil looks identical from start to finish. Check the changes in the thread object: is the paint on the shaft worn, are the edges of the tape curling, has the tip been used blunt, has the pouch been replaced. Work two of these into the story, and readers will count the years themselves, which works better than writing three years.

Trap four: the ending shouts a slogan. The symptom is a final line like I must grow up to be an honest and trustworthy child. The moment such a sentence appears, the story turns sour. The fix is to let the ending rest on one action or one line of dialogue: she takes the pencil and puts it back on the top layer of her pouch, or she says you still remember, and I say I kept it all along. Delete the slogan and leave the lesson for the reader to find.

Trap five: the three plots are written separately with no thread object running through them. The symptom is that you could swap the pencil for an eraser or for money without changing a single word, which means the pencil is only a prop, not a thread. The fix is to give the pencil three appearances: its feature is seen clearly when borrowed, its changes are described while it stays behind, and it is recognized when returned. At the moment of recognition, have a proof, a name, a piece of tape, a chip, anything; physical evidence closes the loop.

Walk through the five traps in order: was forgetting split into concrete events, does the return have a trigger setting, is there physical proof of time, does the ending stop on an action or a line of dialogue, does the pencil appear three times. Fix whichever line fails, then reread and delete any sentence whose removal changes nothing. This checklist also fits every borrow-and-return story about books, umbrellas, or pocket money; swap the prop, and not one of the five traps changes.