

Prompt: Look at the checklists on pgs 200 and 210. Choose and apply one question from checklists to "The Witching Hour."

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One of the claims from the checklist on page two-hundred was to give your essay a strong conclusion. I've always viewed a good essay as one with a strong, punchy conclusion, and that's also been something I've always struggled with. What I found interesting about "The Witching Hour" is that its conclusion seemed relatively "weak" in the sense that it didn't tie everything up and package it very neatly. Reading the story helped me to understand what the checklist was trying to explain by saying that creative nonfiction "rarely attempts to tie up everything." I wondered how you could construct a good conclusion without explicitly trying to punch it home; yet, "The Witching Hour" still gave me strong feelings of youth rebelliousness, the passion that I often see characterized as childlike, and the positive feelings associated with hearing the bed time stories that shaped me into the person I am today. I think the reason this conclusion seemed to have an emotional resonance with me, instead of a logical or academic one as I am accustomed to writing, is that it wasn't looking to inspire one specific thought. To me, "The Witching Hour" read as more of a meditation on the power individual stories have on our lives than one trying to push a specific thought on the reader. As a result, I continued to think about the story and what my thoughts on it were after I had finished reading the essay. That feeling was something I had rarely experienced after reading a nonfiction piece, and really only experienced from excellent poetry.