

Hook

Definition of Hook

Have you ever read a book that could not grab your attention after reading a couple of sentences? On the contrary, you would have definitely read a book that has immediately captured your attention, after which you were unable to put it down. Some books are magnetic, while others are really boring. One of the reasons could be the [narrative](#) hook.

Knowing this, authors share an important literary technique to keep their readers engaged in their stories, which is *hook*, or *narrative hook*, which keep readers' interest alive in the book. It appears at the beginning of the story, and may contain several pages of a novel, several paragraphs of a short story, or it might be only an opening sentence, or a single line.

Types of Hook

There are several types of hook:

dramatic action,
mysterious [setting](#),
engaging characters; and
thematic statements.

Examples of Hook in Literature

Example #1: *Ragweed* (By Avi)

We come to know, from the very first line of Avi's novel *Ragweed*, that this story will be a comical reading experience, as it reads:

“*Ma, a mouse has to do what a mouse has to do.*”

A young countryside mouse named Ragweed leaves his big family behind and sets out to live an adventurous life in the big city. There he encounters some cool dudes and dudettes from the mouse family. Ragweed also faces extreme danger from cats, especially the founding member of F.E.A.R., Willy Silversides.

Willy, along with the vice president, decides to go to any length in order to defeat their arch-nemeses to the point of devastating the Cheese Squeeze Club. Now it is the time for Ragweed to come up with a cunning strategy and muster the courage to defeat the Felines First Brigade. However, this hook has played an important role in making the story attractive.

Example #2: *Pride and Prejudice* (By Jane Austen)

The first sentence of Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice*, is one of the most famous first lines in literature, saying:

“It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.”

This line sets the plot's mood, and captures the attention of readers due to its contrariness and notoriety. It also tells about the marriage [theme](#) of this novel, and introduces ironic tone, which Austen uses structurally and verbally throughout the novel. The Author presents a thematic statement about the value of love and marriage in a society where women have difficulty finding husbands amid class prejudice and financial snobbery.

Example #3: *A Tale of Two Cities* (By Charles Dickens)

One of the most famous and brilliant opening lines in all of literature occurs in Charles Dickens' novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*:

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness ...”

This line hints at the central tension that occurs between family and love,

structural figures, like Paris and London, Charles Darnay and Sydney Carton, and Madame Defarge and Miss Pross. The tone of the entire novel is set by this famous sentence.

Example #4: *Feed* (By M. T. Anderson)

Readers cannot resist an alarmingly satirical line of M. T. Anderson's novel *Feed*, which reads:

“We went to the moon to have fun, but the moon turned out to completely suck.”

This line helps to set the stage for the novel's plot about a futuristic world, which is overrun by uncontrolled consumerism, and where humans implant computer chips in most of the infants at birth. Children do not need to go to schools, since they can Google to get information that they might need, and people need not converse with anyone, as they can IM instantly. Hence, the first catchy line gives an indication about the theme of this narrative, and hooks the readers' attention.

Function of Hook

Authors use hook as a critical component of their writing, as it allows them to demonstrate to readers how their literary works are worth reading within the first minute. This literary technique hooks the attention of readers and appeals to their minds. Readers also get a great sense of entertainment through strong and meaningful opening lines that might stick in their heads forever. We frequently find the use of narrative hook in mystery [fiction](#) and [suspense](#) thrillers. Besides, authors use it in a number of ways, such as by employing thematic statements and mysterious settings, or using characters.