**The Beginning: Tips for opening creative writing:**

In today's fast-moving world, the first sentence of your short story should catch your reader's attention with the **unusual**, the **unexpected**, an **action**, or a [**conflict**](http://jerz.setonhill.edu/writing/creative/crisis-vs-conflict.htm). Begin with tension and immediacy. Remember that short stories need to start close to their end.

**EXAMPLE:**

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|  | I heard my neighbor through the wall. |
|  | *Dry and uninteresting.* |
|  | The neighbor behind us practiced scream therapy in his shower almost every day. |
|  | *The second sentence catches the reader's attention. Who is this guy who goes in his shower every day and screams? Why does he do that? What, exactly, is "scream therapy"? Let's keep reading...* |
|  | The first time I heard him, I stood in the bathroom listening at our shared wall for ten minutes, debating the wisdom of calling the police. It was very different from living in the duplex over middle-aged Mr. and Mrs. Brown and their two young sons in Duluth. |

*The rest of the paragraph introduces I and an internal conflict as the protagonist debates a course of action and introduces an intriguing contrast of past and present setting.*