

EDUC 432.1 (Summer 2012) Craft Table for *Happy Like Soccer*

Author: Maribeth Boelts | Illustrator: Lauren Castillo

Craft Move	Page Numbers	Why the Author Might Be Doing This... (Explaining the Craft Move)
Circular Ending	9, 29	<p>Authors use a circular type of ending to complete/finish their stories and connect the beginning of the story to the end, making it like a circle.</p> <p>The author takes Sierra through the circular ending by having no one cheer for her by name at the beginning of the story. Sierra says "They cheer for me by the number on my uniform not knowing my name." By doing this it creates a sense of loneliness by not having her auntie at the game. At the end, Sierra's neighbors/auntie calls her name, not just her number because they know her. Her auntie is yelling and cheering the loudest. This brings the story full circle because no one is cheering her name in the beginning. At the end of the story, everyone knows her and her name. You will have to introduce a special moment one way and then return to this special moment late in your writing. Just like Sierra was just a number but in the end she had a name to go with the number.</p> <p>So, as a writer you can use this type of circular ending for your story by having something happen in the beginning of the story that is corrected, or at least mentioned again at the end of the story.</p>
Descriptive Language	Pgs. 3, 15	<p>Authors use words describing words, helping a reader to picture in their mind what is happening in the story. On page 3, the author paints a vivid picture, contrasting Sierra's familiar neighborhood and the location of where her team plays soccer. She describes the scene by saying "my shoes have flames and my ball spins on this spread-out sea of grass with no weeds, fields with no holes and real goals..." When writing, one needs to paint a picture for the reader using descriptive language, making a piece of writing come alive. The author gives another example of descriptive language on page 15, describing the thunderstorm that is passing over the field and about to ruin the anticipated soccer game. To describe the storm Boelts writes, "fat raindrops plopping. Then thunder starts its show, and in the distance lightning." The reader knows that a heavy storm is on its way, which may cause disappointment for Sierra. In your own writing, you can try to take a sentence and add describing words to make your sentence more vivid, which will activate your reader's</p>

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senses.

Dialogue		<p>Dialogue is a conversation that occurs between two or more characters. The characters take turns talking, which makes it a conversation or dialogue. Authors may use dialogue in a text to make it more interesting or to model how characters (people or animals) communicate with one another.</p>
	12-13	<p>On pages 12-13, Sierra and her aunt are talking about her aunt's boss overhearing the conversation between Sierra and her aunt and the boss asking Sierra's aunt if she wants to switch shifts so that she can to go Sierra's soccer game. "What did you tell him?" Sierra asks; and her aunt responds, "I said, 'Yes, of course I would.'" The author may have used this exchange to show how family members try to be flexible and try to support one another, as well as how people take turns when they are speaking.</p>
	27	<p>On page 27, Sierra tells her aunt that she talked with the coach about moving the location of the soccer game. Her aunt asked, "You did that for me?" Sierra nods and responds, "For me, too." Once again, the author may have used this conversation to show Sierra's support and understanding of her aunt's work schedule and Sierra's aunt's support of Sierra's playing soccer and the importance of having someone special attend her games.</p>
		<p>Authors sometimes use dialogue to show what the characters in the text are thinking and/or feeling and to add more meaning and emotion to the text. You may want to add dialogue to your writing when you want to show the reader what your character is thinking or feeling.</p>
Internal thinking	9,10,17	<p>In <i>Happy Like Soccer</i>, Maribeth Boelts does not write out every time Sierra has a thought. Instead, she uses the craft move of internal thinking. For example, Seirra does not always express how she is feeling to others. However, the author may possibly use internal thinking to help you (the reader) understand Sierra's emotions at various points in the story. Sierra is very hesitant to speak up to adults. On page 9, she expresses her lonely feelings by thinking, "Every girl has someone there but me." This line of internal thinking illustrates Sierra's loneliness at the suburban soccer game. On page 10, she expresses her reluctance to speak up to her coach, in the line, "I bite my lip without</p>

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		<p>meaning to and tell him no.” The reader is aware that she wants to speak up, but feels unable. On page 17, she expresses her disappointment. Rather than stating that she is disappointed the author chooses to share Sierra’s internal thinking, “I swallow sure that the rescheduled last game will be on a Saturday, sure it will be outside of the city, sure my auntie’s boss won’t do two favors in a row.” Rather than sharing every time your character changes their emotion using a statement, you could choose to use a craft move, like internal thinking, to express your character’s feelings. This is just like what Maribeth Boelts did to show how the main character was feeling in <i>Happy Like Soccer</i>.</p>
Movement of Time and Place	6	<p>Authors often move through a setting and time by describing a change of location, for the reader to be aware of a change, taking place. On page 6, Boelts takes you on a journey by saying “weav[ing] past the empty lot and through my neighborhood and outside the city, where the buses don’t run.” You can picture being in a car <i>weaving, driving through an abandoned location</i> and going to a more secluded area where buses do not run. As a writer, the changing of setting and time should be smooth, in a logical sequence (beginning, middle, end) and not abrupt. There should be a clear transition that a reader can follow. On page 13, Sierra and her aunt go to the soccer game together. Boelts takes you on another trip out of the city, transitioning the setting for a second time. Boelts writes that they are “travel[ing] to the game together, riding on one bus past the empty lot, then another through the city, then walking the rest of the way to the field.” She changes the way they travel to keep your attention but alerting you that there is another setting change. As a writer you can take your reader on a journey through time and setting by using logical sequencing, as well as strong description and verbs.</p>
Power of Three		<p>Authors use the power of three for various reasons. The power of three is when the author uses a list of three things in some way. It could be three places that were passed by from one place to another. It may be three activities that were done by the character. It could be three ways that a character was feeling. All of these ways add details to the text and help the text to be more meaningful to the reader.</p>

6 The author may have used “past the empty lot and through my neighborhood and outside the city” on page 6 to show that it takes a long time to travel from Sierra’s home to the soccer field. When authors only have the characters pass one place when travelling, it appears to be a short trip. When the characters pass two places, it seems longer. However, when three places are used, we know that it seems like a very long time to Sierra.

17 On page 17, when Sierra’s soccer game is canceled due to weather but will be rescheduled, the author is expressing Sierra’s feelings as she swallows. She is “sure that the rescheduled last game will be on a Saturday, sure it will be outside the city, sure my auntie’s boss won’t do two favors right in a row.” The author may be trying to let the reader know how disappointed Sierra was about her soccer game being canceled and her aunt not being able to attend the game when it is rescheduled, due to her work schedule.

On page 18, the author may have written “we play cards and eat cherry cake and look at old pictures” to show the quality time Sierra and her aunt are spending together while both are dealing with the disappointment of the game’s being canceled. The details help the reader to see that Sierra’s aunt is trying to soothe Sierra and to let her know that she empathizes with her and understands how she feels and may feel the same way.

18 Sometimes authors mention places, feelings, activities, etc., in threes to show the importance and details of events in the text. Grouping things in threes draws the reader’s attention to what is happening.

When you write today, or any day, you may want to consider using the power of three to show the importance and details of events in your writing.

Repetition Cover, 3, 4

The author may have used “Nothing makes me _____ like soccer” to show the importance of soccer in Sierra’s life. She titled the book Happy Like Soccer, and then used the phrase on page 3 to show why soccer makes Sierra happy; she also used the phrase on page 4 to show why soccer makes Sierra sad. Authors sometimes repeat words to draw attention to and to put more emphasis on important ideas in the text.

29

The author may have used “And I hear my name...And above the rest, I hear my auntie’s strong voice cheering me on.” To emphasize the support that Sierra is receiving from the fans because she is in a place where people know her, in particular her aunt. Sometimes authors repeat words in sentences that are close to draw the reader’s attention to something that is important. The author may be trying to show how important it is to Sierra to have her aunt at the soccer game cheering for her.

When you write today and every day, consider where in your writing you can repeat a phrase or word to bring the reader’s attention to something that is important in your writing piece.

Satisfying
Ending

When authors write, they focus on their audience and try to write an ending that is satisfying to the reader. In order for an ending to be satisfying to a reader, it needs to be connected to the story in some way, as well as being interesting and memorable. Some ways that authors choose to end a story are to reveal what the character is thinking or feeling, to show a final action, to show a lesson learned by the characters, or to linger on a character’s memory of a place or event. The important thing to remember is that the ending is connected to the story, is interesting and memorable, and is satisfying to the reader.

13, 30

As we read through the book, Sierra’s aunt tells Sierra that “Flying dreams mean you’re feeling fine” (page 13); she is referring to Sierra’s excitement about the soccer game and letting her know that what Sierra is feeling is a good feeling. During the soccer game at the end of the book (page 30), Sierra says, “I know for real that I am flying”, along with a picture that shows her content face as she is going after the soccer ball. She is feeling really good about her aunt being able to attend her soccer game. The author may have used this ending to show Sierra’s feelings of “feeling fine” or to show that Sierra is remembering what her aunt told her about flying dreams.

All readers like to have satisfying endings, so try to have a satisfying ending that is memorable and interesting as well as being connected to the story.

The next time you write, you may want to think about

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		including a satisfying ending that is interesting and memorable and is connected to the story so that the reader will feel good about what he or she has read and will want to read more pieces of your writing.
Sensory Details	5, 16, 19	When we discuss the term “sensory details” we are referring to just that; your five senses. Sensory details in a story are details that attract your five senses. The author uses the sensory detail of the auntie’s hand because the reader can actually feel the warmth and comfort. The reader can see the storm coming and feel the rain drops and therefore share the hopelessness the character feels. It makes the story more interesting. The reader can better relate to the feeling rather than words. You can use this to better engage your reader and share character emotions without boring language and limiting your character. By limiting your character, I mean you are not only giving them just one emotion. They can experience several thoughts and feelings by using a more descriptive sentence. You can use this example to describe a particular sense very specifically, allowing the reader to live in the moment with the character and better connect to the story. So as a writer you can use specific sensory words to describe a scene or what a character’s emotions. To do this, look at your own work where you describe a scene and try to think about what you would hear, feel, taste, smell, and see within that moment. Choose one or two of these senses and describe how this scene would feel, look, taste, smell, and/or hear from the character’s perspective and describe it.
Setting Details	3, 28-29	The importance of setting is evident in the rich descriptions Boelts utilizes. Sierra describes what she sees around her during soccer games and on the bus. Authors choose specific words or phrases to help their readers create pictures in their mind. This picture might be in contrast to what a reader knows or what the character knows. For example, Sierra provides the reader with an understanding of her home when she contrasts it to the soccer field on page 3, “ball spins on this spread-out sea of grass with no weeds, fields with no holes, and real goals, not two garbage cans shoved together like in the lot by my apartment.” Details about the setting allow us to understand the surroundings and get a better picture in our mind. Another example is on page 28 when Sierra describes what she sees and hears. “At the last game, there are families on blankets, and people waving from foldout chairs. [...] And I hear my name because they know <i>me</i> not just my number.”

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		(Pgs 28-29). These setting details help to explain what Sierra was missing from her other game. Whenever you want to explain the setting, you can add details that describe what a character is seeing or hearing. Using interesting details will paint a picture in your readers' minds. It can also create a comparison between two pages of your story.
Show, Not Tell	5, 10	<p>Writers show, not tell is a technique that allows a writer to describe a situation/moment without explaining exactly what is happening or what a character is feeling to the reader. The reader can simply understand exactly how the character is feeling without being directly told by the author, this is called "show, not tell".</p> <p>When the auntie "feels low around the edges" the reader knows she is sad and disappointed with the situation because the physical description of the aunt is sinking. We know that she is sad because we have all felt "low around the edges" ourselves. Also, when the character bites her lip while speaking with her coach, she is obviously nervous, but the author doesn't outright tell you that she has something to tell her coach, you just know she does because you know what biting your lip can be considered a nervous habit. The author does this so that you can directly relate to the characters. We have felt the way they have felt before and the description is more interesting than just telling the reader that the aunt is sad or the girl is nervous. You can use this technique in your writing to better engage your readers. Look at your writing and find a sentence where you directly explain how your character is feeling. Then revise that sentence to describe the emotion rather than just saying it. For example, if your character is scared, explain that he is shaking, looking around quickly, or any other physical emotions that would describe being scared.</p>
Vivid Language and Rich Descriptions	8,22	<p>The author frequently uses vivid language in <i>Happy Like Soccer</i>. Vivid language helps the reader to have a clear picture of a person, place, thing, or event. Some of the best examples from <i>Happy Like Soccer</i> are listed below. On page 8, she describes what Sierra notices in her surroundings at the game using the following language, "When the game starts, I do play, I do have fun, but my eyes have their own mind, spying the sidelines, where families sit on blankets and wave from fold out chairs." This description is vivid and may possibly have been added by Ms. Boelts to explain how the suburban soccer field experience is different than what Sierra is used to noticing</p>

in the city when she plays soccer.

On page 22, the Sierra states, “ My heart is thumping, the way it does when my teacher calls on me even though I haven’t raised my hand. ... I take a breath and tell him I’m sorry for being late, and I then say my idea fast and all run-on that maybe the game could be on a Monday.”

These lines vividly describe the phone call where the Sierra nervously petitions the coach to change the date to accommodate her auntie’s schedule. This highly descriptive language helps you (the reader) to feel how anxious, nervous, and worried Sierra is feeling as she speaks to her coach. Ms. Boelts may add vivid language to her books to paint a picture for the reader as if they are actually a part of the story.

You too can add vivid language. When you would like to describe an important scene using vivid and descriptive language helps your reader to paint a picture in their mind about what is happening. Using vivid and descriptive language is a craft move that you can make just like Maribeth Boelts.
