

MINILESSON:

WOMAN & SPIDER

What's the best way to begin a story about a confrontation between a woman and a spider? What impression do you wish to create in your reader's mind? Remember that a good lead creates a sense of anticipation and also draws your reader in, making him or her want to keep reading. So you think any of these leads works well? Which one is best? Why? Which doesn't work? Why?

After discussing these, try brainstorming some of your own. Then, take a look at Robert Fulghum's original. Your teacher may wish to share the whole story.

Possible leads:

- ▶ Do you like spiders? Some people do and some don't
- ▶ Have you ever run full-force into a sticky spider web? It's a horrid experience, I can tell you!
- ▶ Following is a story about how my neighbor reacted when she ran into a spider web one morning on her way to aerobics class.
- ▶ Spiders! Yuck! The very thought gives me the creeps!!
- ▶ It's dumb to be afraid of spiders, but some people just can't help it, I guess.
- ▶ "Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaagh!" yelled my neighbor, as she ran headlong into a giant spider web.

Now try writing one, two, or three leads of your own. Then, compare what you've written to Robert Fulghum's original:

This is my neighbor. Nice lady. Coming out her front door, on her way to work and in her "looking gook" mode. She's locking the door now and picking up her daily luggage: Purse, lunch bag, gym bag for aerobics, and the garbage bucket to take out. She turns, sees me, gives me the big, smiling Hello, takes three steps across her front porch and goes "AAAAAAAAAAAAAGGGGGGGHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!" (That's a direct quote.)

Robert Fulghum

All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten

Ivy Books, 1986, page 13