**Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Hooks – to engage your audience**

**Lackluster and typical:** The day I had to present a speech in front of the class without any notes taught me many lessons.

**Exciting alternatives:**

1. **With Dialogue**: “Hurry or you’ll be late!” called my mother from the bottom of the stairs. “Today of all days you want to be on time.” If I had only known what that day would bring, I would have stayed in bed. This is because…
2. **With a Question**: Have you ever had a day when you wished you had stayed in bed? As I rushed to catch the bus on what seemed to be a perfectly normal day I had no idea what was ahead of me. See, it was on this day that…
3. **With Vivid Description**: The sun was warm on my back as I raced toward the waiting yellow school bus. As I nestled into the worn leather seat I was greeted by the friendly voices of other excited children. The look on my face was one of confidence and contentment. With a jerk the bus rumbled down the road and I was on my way into, what I would soon discover was going to be, one of the worst days of my life. This is because…
4. **With an Interesting Fact**: Shock has been known to kill 12 year olds. It can cause their brains to explode and their hearts to come to a dead stop. These facts raced through my mind as I stood dumbfounded in front of my seventh grade classmates. I wish I had stayed in bed, because
5. **With Sound Effects**: “Buzzzzzz!” The sound of my alarm clock droned in my ears as I struggled to come awake. With a start I sat straight up in my bed. This was my big day and I had to be on time. I was so excited to get to school and present my fabulous speech. However, my excited soon turned to despair when I realized that…

**There are, of course, other interesting ways to begin your writing pieces, but these are some suggestions you can use to help you engage your reader. Keep this sheet in your binder so that you can refer to it each time you start a new piece of writing, or are revising a piece you have already written.**