



**Inspired Instruction, LLC.
Standards Solution Holding**

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Conflict + Turning Point + Lesson = Theme

How does the turning point of a story affect the theme?



1. Review terminology
 - Conflict (problem)
 - Turning point (climax)
 - Resolution (denouement)
 - Theme (main idea)
 - Lesson
2. Read “Two Were Left” without the ending.
 - What is the conflict?
 - Predict how the conflict will be solved.
3. Read ending A (the original story)
 - Explain the turning point and resolution (how the conflict is resolved)
 - What is the lesson in this story?
 - What is the theme?
4. Now read the story with ending B (an alternate ending)
 - Explain the turning point and resolution (how the conflict is solved)
 - What is the lesson in this version?
 - What is the theme?

Discuss: *How do the turning point and resolution affect the theme?*

Two Were Left

By Hugh B. Cave

Ending “A”

A great sob shook Noni’s kneeling body. *He cursed the knife. He swayed blindly, like a boy in an earthquake, and flung the weapon far from him. With empty hands outstretched, he stumbled toward the dog and fell.

The dog growled as he circled the boy’s body. And Noni was sick with fear. In flinging away the knife, he had left himself defenseless. He was too weak to crawl after it now. He was at Nimuk’s mercy. And Nimuk was hungry. The dog circled him and was creeping up from behind. Noni heard the rattle in the savage throat. He shut his eyes, praying that the attack might be swift. He felt the dog’s breath against his neck and his feet against his leg. A scream gathered in the boy’s throat.

Then he felt the dog’s hot tongue licking his face.

Noni’s eyes opened. Crying softly, he thrust out an arm and drew the dog’s face down against his own . . .

The plane came out of the south an hour later. Its pilot, a young man of the Coast Patrol, looked down and saw something flashing. It was the sun gleaming on something shiny which moved. His curiosity aroused, the pilot banked his ship and descended. Now he saw, in the shadow of the peak of ice, a dark, still shape that appeared to be human. Or were there two shapes? He set his ship down in a water lane and investigated. There were two shapes, boy and dog. The boy was unconscious but alive. The dog whined feebly but was too weak to move.

The gleaming object which had caught the pilot’s attention was a crude knife, stuck point first into the ice a little distance away, and quivering in the wind.

Two Were Left
(Ending “B” by M.B. Byrd)

A great sob shook Noni’s kneeling body. *He lunged forward swaying blindly, like a boy in an earthquake, and caught the dog by the scruff. The knife found the dog’s throat as watery visions of the men from his village looked on with understanding. His love for his dog made him act quickly and efficiently.

It was not easy, but the boy did what he had to do, what others had done before him to keep from starving. His throat ached as he took the nourishment. Now he was truly alone.

Sobbing softly, exhaustion overcame him, and Noni fell asleep.

The plane came out of the south an hour later. Its pilot, a young man of the Coast Patrol, looked down and noticed a dark spot on the surface of an ice burg. It was a dark red circle, and it appeared that something lay at its center. His curiosity aroused, the pilot banked his ship and descended. Now he saw, on the white ice next to the red circle, a dark, still shape that appeared to be human. He set his ship down in a water lane and investigated. There were two shapes. The boy was unconscious but alive. The dog lay motionless in the center of the red circle.

When Noni recovered and returned to his village, his mother and father smothered him with hugs and kisses, tears of happiness streaking their wind worn faces. But for now, it was too much to ask for Noni to be happy.

The people of his village were respectful and kind, but they did not celebrate. Noni had been confronted with a terrible choice; as others had done before him, he had chosen life, and they approved.

Two Were Left by Hugh B. Cave

~Without an Ending~

On the third night of hunger, Noni thought of the dog. Nothing of flesh and blood lived upon the floating ice island except those two. In the breakup, Noni had lost his sled, his food, his furs, even his knife. He had saved only Nimuk, his great devoted husky. And now the two, marooned on the ice, eyed each other warily – each keeping his distance.

Noni's love for Nimuk was real, very real—as real as hunger and cold nights and the gnawing pain of his injured leg. But the men of his village killed their dogs when food was scarce, didn't they? And without thinking twice about it. And Nimuk, he told himself, when hungry enough, would seek food. "One of us will soon be eating the other," Noni thought. "So . . ."

He could not kill the dog with his bare hands. Nimuk was powerful and much fresher than he. A weapon, then, was needed. Removing his mittens, he unstrapped the braces from his leg. When he had hurt his leg a few weeks ago, he had made the brace from bits of harness and two thin strips of iron. Kneeling now, he wedged one of the iron strips into a crack in the ice and began to rub the other against it with firm, slow strokes.

Nimuk watched him, and it seemed to Noni that the dog's eyes glowed more brightly. He worked on, trying not to remember why. The slab of iron had an edge now. It had begun to take shape. Daylight found his task completed. Noni pulled the finished knife from the ice and thumbed its edge. The sun's glare reflected from it, stabbed at his eyes and momentarily blinded him.

Noni steeled himself. "Here, Nimuk," he called softly.

The dog suspiciously watched him.

"Come here," Noni called.

Nimuk came closer. Noni read fear in the dog's eyes. He read hunger and suffering in the dog's labored breathing and awkward crouch. His heart wept. He hated himself and fought against it. Closer Nimuk came, aware of his intentions. Now Noni felt a thickening in his throat. He saw the dog's eyes, and they were wells of suffering. Now! Now was the time to strike.