Let’s practice exciting endings!

Slow the action down at the end. After you have spent so much time fine tuning your perfect story don’t rush the ending and tie up all the loose ends in a few sentences. This makes the story deeply unsatisfactory for the reader!

Little Doctor and the Fearless Beast is a picture book by Sophie Gilmore. The main character ‘Little Doctor’ is caring, resilient and brave. She perseveres.

Read the beginning of the story and write a satisfactory ending- an ending that makes you feel happy about the end of the story- not leaving you thinking ‘that was disappointing…’
There once lived a child the crocodiles called Little Doctor. The creatures came from all around to see her and Little Doctor treated each one with care. As she worked, she admired their tough armour and large, powerful jaws.

In exchange for her kindness, the crocodiles told Little Doctor tales. Each legend teemed with terrible danger, dizzying escapes, and acts of great mischief.

Little Doctor marvelled at the fearless beasts they described. One day, such a legendary beast arrived. Little Doctor had heard whispers of her.

Big Mean was the biggest in the land, with stony eyes and jaws large enough to devour Little Doctor in one fell swoop. But today, her mouth was clamped shut. Little Doctor examined Big Mean for bruises, scrapes, or broken bones, keeping a wary eye on those jaws. The crocodile’s eyes followed her every move, making Little Doctor feel as though she were the one being examined.

Big Mean seemed fine. Perhaps it was a fever? Little Doctor approached the beast with a thermometer to pop under her tongue. But Big Mean did not like that. Not one bit.

Little Doctor tried again. And again. As Little Doctor grew more determined to help, Big Mean grew meaner. Little Doctor retreated, feeling tired and cross. “Why are you here?” she muttered rather loudly. She returned to her other patients, her temper soothed by her work.

As Big Mean watched Little Doctor’s tenderness toward her fellow crocodiles, something inside her softened. She closed her eyes and drifted off into a doze.

Little Doctor noticed the great beast resting and an idea took hold. She found a volunteer, and they sprang into action.

The plan was going well until -

Little Doctor tumbled through the air.

In that instant, Big Mean’s eyes flashed.

She finally opened her tremendous jaws wide, wide as a river…

And Little Doctor fell right in.
Lesson 2

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No! 😢😢😢
The story can’t end here!

No writer would finish the story here.
No reader would be satisfied with this ending.

Write your own ending for the story of Little Doctor.
Remember to stay true to your character.
Little Doctor perseveres and cares for the crocodiles.

What would she do?
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This is extremely disappointing. It doesn’t respect the build up of the story or the characters of Little Doctor or Big Mean. It is lazy and unimaginative.

An ending like this doesn’t sound like her character at all and just seems like a ‘cop out’ (an easy way out because you could not be bothered). Little Doctor loved the crocodiles- why would she be carrying a knife and a gun? There was no mention of her needing them in the earlier part of the story. Also, Big Mean could have eaten Little Doctor straight away. Why bother describing her waiting to eat Little Doctor? This ending is not satisfying at all.
Possible Story Ending:

With a snap, the gigantic crocodile swallowed Little Doctor whole. Little Doctor, with her eyes squeezed tight, waited to be crunched and munched. It felt tight and damp inside Big Mean’s throat and Little Doctor was slowly suffocating. She knew that she only had a few more breaths left before she ran out of air.

Suddenly a muffled yelling sound came through and a tiny crack of light appeared through the monstrous jagged teeth. The tiny crack of light soon became bright enough for Little Doctor to see the other crocodile patients peering inside the cavernous mouth.

Little Doctor felt a tremor like a huge earthquake and felt herself being pushed forward over Big Mean’s tongue towards the outside world. As she was wiggling past she felt a hard cold bar of steel against her foot.

“That doesn’t belong there” Little Doctor muttered to herself. Little Doctor had worked with crocodiles for so long that she knew the anatomy of a crocodile better than she knew herself.

She reached behind her, held on to the object and pulled. Big Mean spluttered and coughed yet all the while taking care not to crush Little Doctor. The little girl pulled and pulled till with one final cough Little Doctor came tumbling out of Big Mean's mouth and following close behind her was an old, mangled shopping trolley. That was why Big Mean didn’t want to open her mouth- it was too sore!

“HOORAY” cheered all the crocodiles and Big Mean smiled with relief. “Thank you Little Doctor.”

Little Doctor beamed. As Big Mean returned to the swamp she sang out like thunder:

“Little Doctor is the bravest and the kindest. Little Doctor is a Fearless Beast!”
The things I tried to keep **consistent** in the story:

- Little Doctor was brave, persistent and caring to the end.
- Big Mean needed to push the story of Little Doctor forward. Little Doctor is the hero of the story so it would not make any sense to have Big Mean eat her.
- I tried to incorporate the title into the ending.

**Activity**

Now, write your own ending to the story of Little Doctor.

Remember:

- Build tension by slowing down the action. Describe each feeling and sensory detail of the exciting ending.
- Stay true to the character- the ending needs to be consistent with the beginning of the story. Eg, Don’t say that Little Doctor had laser eyes superpowers if it had never been mentioned before in the story.