If you enjoyed this...

Then try these...
It is the future. There is no war, no hunger, no pain. No one in The Community wants for anything. It’s a perfect world. Or is it? On day, Jonas, a sensitive twelve year old boy, is selected as the receiver of Memory a The Ceremony. His life will never be the same.

The opening...

It was almost December and Jonas was beginning to be frightened. No. Wrong word, Jonas thought. Frightened meant that deep sickening feeling of something terrible about to happen. Frightened was the way he felt a year ago when an unidentified aircraft had over flown the community twice. He had seen it both times. Squinting towards the sky, he had seen the sleek jet, almost a blur at its high speed, go past, and a second later heard the blast of sound that followed.
Many hundreds of years ago, the city of Ember was created by the Builders to contain everything needed for human survival. It worked. But now the food is running out and the light is failing. Two children, Lina and Doon, discover an ancient parchment. Can they decipher it and find a way out of Ember? And, if they can, will anyone listen and follow?

The City of Ember (Jeanne DuPrau, 2003)

What’s this one about?

Many hundreds of years ago, the city of Ember was created by the Builders to contain everything needed for human survival. It worked. But now the food is running out and the light is failing. Two children, Lina and Doon, discover an ancient parchment. Can they decipher it and find a way out of Ember? And, if they can, will anyone listen and follow?

The opening...

When the city of Ember was just built and not yet inhabited, the chief builder and the assistant builder, both of them weary, sat down to speak of the future.

‘They must not leave the city for at least two hundred years’, said the chief builder.

‘Or perhaps two hundred and twenty.’

‘Is that long enough?’ asked his assistant.

‘It should be. We can’t know for sure.’
Gone (Michael Grant, 2008)

What’s this one about?

If all the adults disappeared, what would you do? In the blink of an eye, the world changes and those left must do all they can to survive. But everyone’s idea of survival is different. Some look after themselves, some look after others, and some will do anything for power. Others, like Sam and Astrid, try to work out what is happening and what to do about it.

The opening...

One minute the teacher was talking about the Civil War. And the next minute he was gone.

There.

Gone.

No ‘poof’. No flash of light. No explosion.
The Knife of Never Letting Go
(Patrick Ness, 2008)

What’s this one about?

Todd Hewitt is twelve, the last boy in Prentisstown, a town of only men. He lives in a world full of ‘noise’ in which the private thoughts of every man and animal are audible. In one month he will be thirteen and a man. But the town is keeping secrets from him, secrets that will force him to go on the run along with his dog and the first girl he has ever met.

The opening...

The first thing you find out when your dog learns to talk is that dogs don’t got nothing much to say. About anything.

‘Need a poo, Todd.’

‘Shut up Manchee.’

‘Poo. Poo, Todd.’

‘I said shut it.’

We’re walking across the fields south-east of town, those ones that slope down to the river and head on towards the swamp. Ben’s sent me to pick him some swamp apples and he’s made me take manchee with me...
Lord of the Flies (William Golding, 1954)

What’s this one about?

A plane crashes on an uninhabited island and the only survivors, a group of schoolboys, assemble on the beach and wait to be rescued. By day they inhabit a land of bright fantastic birds and dark blue seas, but at night their dreams are haunted by the image of a terrifying beast. Before long, the well-behaved party of schoolboys has turned into a tribe of murderous savages.

The opening...

The boy with the fair hair lowered himself down the last few feet of rock and began to pick his way towards the lagoon. Though he had taken off his school sweater and trailed it now from one hand, his grey shirt stuck to him and was plastered to his forehead. All round him the long scar smashed into the jungle was a bath of heat. He was clambering heavily among the creepers and broken trunks when a bird, a vision of red and yellow, flashed upwards with a witch-like cry; and this cry was echoed by another.
Nailer’s time is running out. He’s getting too big for his work — stripping copper wire from old oil tankers — and once he’s off the crew he’s on his own with no food, no money and no way of earning his keep. He has one last chance.

The opening...

Nailer clambered through a service duct, tugging at copper wire and yanking it free. Ancient asbestos fibres and mouse grit puffed up around him as the wire tore loose. He scrambled deeper into the duct, jerking more wire from its aluminium staples. The staples pinged about the cramped metal passage like coins offered to the Scavenge God and Nailer felt after them eagerly, hunting for their dull gleam and collecting them in a leather bag he kept at his waist.
How I Live Now (Meg Rosoff, 2004)

What’s this one about?
Fifteen-year-old Daisy thinks she knows all about love. Her mother died giving birth to her, and now her dad has sent her away for the summer, to live in the English countryside with cousins she’s never even met. As war breaks out in London, she discovers what real love is while her world is turned upside down and a perfect summer explodes into a million bewildering pieces.

The opening...
My name is Elizabeth but no one’s ever called me that. My father took one look at me when I was born and must have thought I had the face of someone dignified and sad like an old-fashioned queen or dead person, but what I turned out like is plain, not much there to notice.
The Forest of Hands and Teeth
(Carrie Ryan, 2009)

The opening...

My mother used to tell me about the ocean. She said there was a place where there was nothing but water as far as you could see and that it was always moving, rushing toward you and then away. She once showed me a picture that she said was my great-great-great grandmother standing in the ocean as a child. It has been years since, and the picture was lost to fire long ago, but I remember it, faded and worn. A little girl, surrounded by nothingness.
Seventeen year old Ellie Linton wants one final adventure with her friends before the school holidays are over. Packed in Ellie’s parents’ Landrover, they drive to the famously isolated rock pool dubbed ‘Hell’ by the locals. Returning to their hometown, the teenagers realize that something is seriously wrong.

**What’s this one about?**

Seventeen year old Ellie Linton wants one final adventure with her friends before the school holidays are over. Packed in Ellie’s parents’ Landrover, they drive to the famously isolated rock pool dubbed ‘Hell’ by the locals. Returning to their hometown, the teenagers realize that something is seriously wrong.

**The opening...**

It’s only about half an hour since someone — Robyn I think — said we should write everything down, and it’s only twenty-nine minutes since I got chosen, and for those twenty-nine minutes I’ve had everyone crowded around me gazing at the blank page and yelling ideas and advice.
It had begun as a simple history experiment to liven up their World War II studies and had become a craze that was taking over their lives. Now ‘The Wave’ is out of control. Laurie’s classmates have become highly-disciplined, chanting, saluting fanatics — nothing like the teenagers they were. Her friends scoff at her warnings but Laurie knows she must make them see what they have become before it’s too late.

The opening...

Laurie Saunders sat in the publications office at Gordon High School, chewing on the end of a Bic pen. She was a pretty girl with short light-brown hair and an almost perpetual smile that only disappeared when she was upset or chewing on Bic pens. Lately, she had been chewing on a lot of pens. In fact, there wasn’t a single pen or pencil in her pocketbook that wasn’t worn on the butt end from nervous gnawing. Still, it beat smoking.