

The Ultimate "Show, Don't Tell" Worksheets



Let your reader live the story.



Get Emotional With the Five Senses

To practice using concrete imagery to elicit a tone or emotion, brainstorm a list for each of the following.

Angry Tastes

Foreboding Sounds

Romantic Scents

Devastating Sensations

Creepy Sights

Want to keep this party going? Choose a sense and pick a word from the list below:

- Resentful
- Horrifying
- Delightful
- Calming

- Hopeful
- Grotesque
- Spine-chilling
- Mundane

- Seductive
- Wholesome
- Raging
- Giddy

Action as Emotion

Rewrite each sentence to convey how the character feels by showing what actions they take.

Marisol was excited about her promotion.

Burt resented what his brother said.

• Emily felt lost.

Sky was desperate to win the competition.

Danesh worried about the camping trip.

Riley was terrified of turtles.

Key Into Conflict

Brainstorm external conflicts that would demonstrate—or better yet, fuel—the following [internal conflicts](#).

Two siblings who are jealous of each other

An inconvenient attraction between rivals

A religious leader in a crisis of faith

Key Into Conflict (Continued)

Brainstorm external conflicts that would highlight or challenge the following **themes**.

Love conquers all.

Money is power.

A life lived in fear is not a life worth living.

Say It With Dialogue

Pick a scene from your story in which two characters are in conflict. Write it (or rewrite it) using only dialogue. No description. Not even dialogue tags.

Want an extra challenge? Don't let either one of them say what they're really upset about.

Get Symbolic

Your character is packing for college. What they're packing is a reflection of their state of mind as they prepare to leave home.

In a few lines, describe what they're packing if:

Leaving home is hard for them.

They've been moving around all their life and are numb to the constant cycle of change.

This will be their greatest adventure yet.

Get Symbolic (Continued)

Their hometown is the worst and so is everyone else in it.

They feel like a true adult for the first time.

College isn't for them. They're going out of a sense of obligation to their parents.

Someone they love will die after they leave. They don't know this but you do.