

# Show Don't Tell

## Message in a Bottle





# Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson, I will be able to:

- Explain 'Show, don't tell'
- Magpie 3 strong 'show' sentences for my own writing
- Examine an example text
- Plan my own story





# Show, Don't Tell



The "show, don't tell" writing strategy encourages writers to use descriptive language rather than directly stating them. Don't say John was angry, tell us what it looks like. Don't say that Sarah was sad, tell us what it looks like.

Examples:

**Telling:** John was angry.

**Showing:** John's fists clenched at his sides, his jaw tightening as he stared daggers at the person in front of him. His face flushed red, and his breathing grew heavy.



**Telling:** Sarah was sad.

**Showing:** Sarah's shoulders slumped as she walked. She absentmindedly twirled a strand of hair around her finger whilst tears dripped from her eyes.



# Message in a Bottle - Magpie

Choose one of these to magpie for your own writing.

~~Telling: The message in the bottle lay on the beach.~~

~~Showing: The message in the bottle lay half-buried in the sand, its glass gleaming under the sunlight. Seaweed draped over its sides like a veil, hinting at its long journey through the ocean currents.~~

~~Telling: Clouds came over the beach.~~

~~Showing: Seagulls soared overhead, their cries growing fainter as they disappeared into the dark grey blanket above. A cool breeze whispered through the air as the weather began to change.~~



# Show, Don't Tell - Sort



Match the telling with the showing.

1. The beach was crowded.
2. The beach was windy.
3. The beach was peaceful.



A. The beach was bustling with excitement!

Families spread out their colourful towels, and kids played tag near the water's edge.

B. The beach was a quiet retreat. Waves whispered as they kissed the shore, and seashells glistened in the gentle sunlight.

C. The beach was like a wind tunnel! Gusts of air tousled our hair and sent seagulls soaring high above.

~~prevention~~



# Message in a Bottle



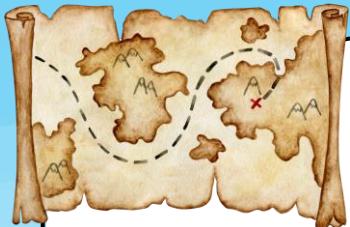
Use show, don't tell for today's writing prompt. Work with a partner and change these sentences to 'show'.



~~pronoun~~  
Telling: "The beach was golden."  
Showing: The sand stretched out in front of her like a blanket of crushed gold, shimmering under the midday sun. Each grain sparkled as if kissed by fire, radiating warmth that tingled against her bare feet.

~~pronoun~~  
Telling: "The bottle was there floating on the waves."  
Showing: The glass bottle bobbed and swayed atop the undulating waves, a lone voyager adrift in the vast expanse of the ocean. With each rise and fall of the tide, it seemed to beckon, a silent messenger carrying secrets whispered by the currents.





# Vocabulary



- Mysterious
- Foreboding
- Surreptitious
- Vessel
- Beacon
- Expedition
- Perplexed
- Conundrum

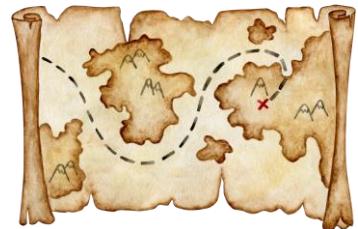
- Motionless
- Unearthed
- Trembling
- Parchment
- Squinting
- Determined
- Treacherous
- Disastrous

~~Review~~





# Example Text



Read the example, critique it and use it to help you write your story.

**Message in a Bottle**

My hands shook as I held the letter, we had buried in the beach some many years ago. It was a wonder that a piece of paper we had planted in a bottle, cliché as it might sound, was all that I had left. I know she was excited that day which made this moment even more emotional, and the tragedy that had unfolded even more painful. Tears rolled down my cheek as I unraveled our mystery, and I could not help but feel such a burning in my chest and a hole in my heart.

To my shock, the letter in the bottle displayed a message that read:

"I am alive. Follow the signs. Find me."

I stood in awe, staring at the paper as if it was alive. What did it mean? Was this some kind of joke? At that moment, the wind died, and the waves fell silent. It was as if the ocean was talking to me. A path in the sand led me away the beach and into the forest.

A wave of emotions came over me as I made my way forward. "Is she really alive," I muttered painfully to myself.

The accident happened 9 months ago, and my life spiraled out of control. She was the glue in my life and was taken suddenly, leaving me in pieces. But now, what seemed like a dream, was an opportunity to see her again.

The trees in the forest stood tall and daunting. There was no path but somehow my feet knew the way. The wind guided me and the leaves blew ferociously towards my destination.

I came to the edge of the forest and my heart skipped a beat. The sun shone directly at a spot on the ground where a girl lay motionless...

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**My Narrative Writing Rubric** / 21

	1	2	3
Grammar & Punctuation	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/> +
Spelling	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/>
Story Idea	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/>
Paragraphing	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/>
Vocabulary	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/>
Setting scene	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/>
Characterization	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/>	<input type="image"/>

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**review**



# Planning

Make sure you plan before you write!



**Narrative Planner**

**Character** - Draw your character & write 5 words to describe them.

**Setting** - Draw your setting & write 5 words to describe it.

**Problem**

**Problem Gets Worse**

**Problem Gets Even Worse**

**Resolution**

**Conclusion / Twist**

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preview

**Narrative Planner**

**Story Starter**

**Characters**

**Setting**

**Beginning**

**Middle**

**End**

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