

# Writing Workshop Practice Exercises

## Show Don't Tell

Helping the Reader to Experience the Story

**Made by Liesl**

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Show Don't Tell: Helping the Reader to Experience the Story

Some sentences are downright boring.

- She was happy.
- He went to the store.
- It was a good day.

You can provide much more detail to help the reader imagine what is happening. Imagine the specific details of the scene so the reader can almost visualize, hear, smell and feel that world. You want the reader to feel as if they are right there, experiencing the story with the descriptions, actions, thoughts and feelings.

Describe someone who is:

angry

sad

List interesting and descriptive images of the following characters:

Rumpelstiltskin

Hagrid from *Harry Potter*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

What kinds of details help people to form mental images in their minds?

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Describe the scene when Cinderella arrives at the ball. Be descriptive!

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Describe how the scene when Hansel was tricked by the witch and was locked in a cage. In this paragraph really show what Hansel was thinking and feeling at that moment.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Don't be too obvious when you write. Try to build interest and suspense as you write by adding details that make people think. Describe the situation without stating it outright. Paint a picture to help the reader imagine the scene, describe what is going on, show the person's emotional reactions, and so forth.

Describe your encounter with Bigfoot.

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The words we choose when we are writing can be exciting or hum-drum. Use the space below to describe someone's feelings. I've provided some "boring" options. Now you should brainstorm and find some better choices that show a wide range of feelings:

	Positive Emotions	Negative Emotions
boring	happy, glad,	sad, angry
interesting	jubilant	fussy, perplexed

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Show Don't Tell

DETAILS! Who? When? Why?  
What? How? Feelings, 5 Senses

They were afraid.

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The house was shabby.

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He felt very sad.

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There was a bad storm

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She was sick.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Show Don't Tell

DETAILS! Who? When? Where? Why?  
What? How? Feelings, 5 Senses

We hurried to the hospital.

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I had a bad day.

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They went to the store.

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It was hot.

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There was a drought.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

List some descriptive sensory words for each of the 5 senses:

Sight

Sound

Taste

Smell

Touch

## Sample Answers

Describe someone who is:

angry	sad
red in the face	sobbing, crying, splotched face
pursed lips	watery eyes
frowning	runny nose
eyebrows touching	trembling lip
narrow eyes	hanging head
seething	sniffing
gritting their teeth	red eyes
clenched fists	bloodshot eyes
breathing heavily	shoulders drooped
	holding their head

What kinds of details help people to form mental images in their minds?

Color

Size

Age

Weight

Shape

Condition

Texture

What did you see? Hear? Smell? Taste? Feel?

What expression did they have?

What was he wearing?



## Positive Emotions

## Negative Emotions

boring	happy, glad	sad, angry
interesting	jubilant, invigorated, exuberant, cheerful, ecstatic, overjoyed, proud, relaxed, empowered, calm, appreciated, honored, protected, secure, upbeat, elated, blissful, perky, thrilled, peaceful, chipper,	fussy, perplexed, trapped, upset, worn-out, stressed, morose, overwhelmed, insecure, irritated, betrayed, chastised, agitated, hostile, stubborn, hopeless, humiliated, bereft, crushed, depressed, out-of-control, vulnerable, hesitant, disappointed, grave, troubled

## Sight

Bright, dark, hazy, light, straight, translucent, striped, etc.

## Sound

Bleating, braying, chiming, jangling, roaring, spluttering, splashing, growling, howling, screeching, wailing, whinnying, croaking, sobbing

## Taste

Sour, bitter, dry, salty, stale, spoiled, juicy, sweet, tangy, fishy, chocolatey, spicy,

## Smell

Rotten, dank, new, musty, pungent, putrid, smoky, strong, woody, rainy, decayed, earthy, mildewy

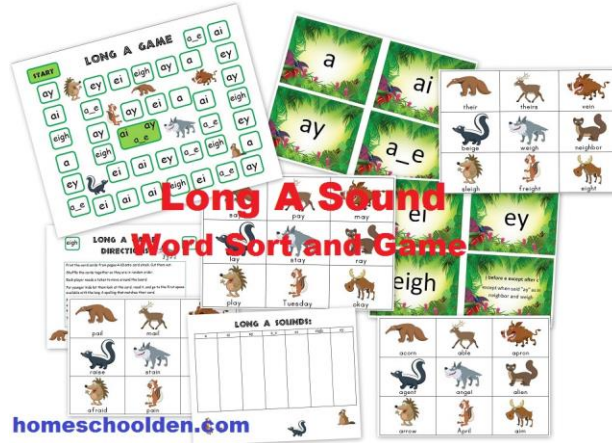
## Touch

Sandy, sticky, rough, smooth, gooey, glassy, gritty, puffy, soft, slimy, flexible, steamy, velvety,

You might be interested in some of our Spelling Games and Word Sort Activities:

## Spelling Activities

- [Long A Sounds /ay/ – a, ai, ay, a-e, ei, eigh, ey –Sorting Cards and Board](#)



### Game!

- [ow ou oy oi aw au Word Sort Activities](#)



- [-er Sound Spelling Printable](#)



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