

Learning Target: Use imagery and strong diction to make your story come alive. Many of the strong examples were written by students. 😊

SHOW DON'T TELL



Show Don't Tell

- BAD Example / Telling:

We released balloons into the air.

- GOOD Example / SHOWING:

The thin ribbon like string slipped through my hand as the balloon ascended towards the sky seemingly decreasing in size as it floated upward until it got swallowed in the clouds.

Show Don't Tell

- BAD Example / Telling
The scary movie ended.
- GOOD Example/ SHOWING:
The final credits ran across the screen as I huddled under my blanket trembling with fear.

Show Don't Tell

- BAD Example / Telling:
I was afraid and confused.
- GOOD Example / SHOWING:
No words came to my now quivering lips as silence drowned out all of my disappearing melancholy thoughts. Sudden movements caught my squinting eyes under the harsh light as I waited for my body and mind to cooperate in an unbroken fashion.

Show Don't Tell

- Bad Example / Telling:
I was dumbfounded and confused.
- GOOD Example / Showing:
My trembling hands couldn't heave my pencil into my delicate pink hand. My quivering lips could not create sound. I could only move my frightened eyes around the classroom. The faces of my peers ranging from expectance to superiority to pity. Some of the merciful ones began mouthing the answer to me, but my distant mind was unable to make sense of the useless motions.

Show Don't Tell

- BAD Example / Telling:
I woke up and crawled out of my cozy bed.
- GOOD Example / SHOWING:
The alarm blared as I rubbed the sleep from my eyes focusing on the luminescent six, zero, zero alerting me it was time lumber out of bed.

Show Don't Tell

- BAD Example / Telling:
My family gathered around my grandma's hospital bed.
- GOOD Example / Showing:
The rhythmic beeping of the monitors surrounding my grandmother's hospital bed told me that her heart was still beating, but the look in my families' faces revealed that it wouldn't be much longer. After one final squeeze she slowly released my hand as the monitors came to a depressing halt.

Show Don't Tell

- Bad Example / Telling:
I hit the gas and we sped down the road.
- Good Example / SHOWING:
Dust and gravel were spit up from the tires of our car and the trees on the side of the road were a blur as we darted down the road nearly careening out of control on the bend before steadying the Mustang and accelerating once again.

Show Don't Tell

- Bad Example / Telling:

We nervously gathered around the coach in the huddle as we were about to embark on overtime of the championship basketball game.

- GOOD Example / SHOWING:

Our adrenaline filled, sweat drenched bodies hovered around our coach whose nostrils flared as he barked commands. My eyes darted to the glowing scoreboard which announced a 30-30 score with only 5 seconds remaining in the game.