

Show, Don't Tell

The entire lesson is presented through a Google Drive Presentation. You can download the presentation to use with your students. The presentation is ready to go. Use it as is or change up the examples. All the text is editable.

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When I left my office that beautiful spring day, I had no idea what was in store for me. To begin with, everything was too perfect for anything unusual to happen. It was one of those days when a man feels good, feels like speaking to his neighbor, is glad to live in a country like ours, and proud of his government. You know what I mean, one of those rare days when everything is right and nothing is wrong.



I left work feeling happy. It was a good day.

What differences did you see in the two versions?

The first version:

- was much longer
- had describing words such as beautiful spring day
- created a mood
- built up a feeling that something was about to happen



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Which is better?
This . . .

As graceful as any queen, with her head high in the air, and her long red tail arched in a perfect rainbow, my little dog walked down the table. With her warm gray eyes staring straight at me, on she came. Walking up to me, she laid her head on my shoulder. As I put my arms around her, the crowd exploded.



Or This?

Little Ann walked across the table towards Billy. She did a good job, and the men cheered.

1. In the first version, could you picture Little Ann as she competed in the beauty contest?
2. Go back and highlight words that describe Little Ann.
3. Find the metaphor. Little Ann's tail was compared to what?



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Which is better?



a. Papers overflowed my cramped desk as I rummaged for the pencil I knew was buried somewhere inside its dark depths.

b. My desk is a mess.

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Which is better?

a. The broken windows and creaking hinges made me tremble as I slowly crossed the shadowed yard toward the dilapidated house.

b. I was scared as I walked toward the haunted house.



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Now let's practice by writing our own paragraph. First name some things a person might do when angry.

Compare your list to the one on the next slide.



- loud sighs
- wringing hands
- cracking of knuckles
- evil eye
- eyes narrow

- pace back and forth
- face goes red
- fists clench open and shut
- voice gets louder
- veins popping out in forehead
- forehead creases
- rolled up sleeves of shirt with quick jerky movements

Write a paragraph describing your anger as you tell a police officer that a robber just stole your wallet with all your money inside. Use as many of the phrases from the previous slide as possible.



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Pacing back and forth and wringing my hands, I drew in a shaky voice. I could feel my face steaming and knew I must be the color of an apple. My voice grew louder, and I knew my veins were popping out on my forehead as I told the officer that I couldn't even pay for a ride home without my wallet.



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You will be given an Oreo cookie.

- Breathe in; how does it smell?
- How are you feeling when you hold the cookie, anticipating the first bite?
- Now slowly take a small bite. How does the cookie feel in your mouth? How does it taste?

Make a list of phrases that describe your experience eating the cookie. Be sure to include some similes and metaphors.



Now write a paragraph. Here is the situation. You are very hungry, your stomach growls. You rummage through the kitchen and find a new package of Oreos. Describe the experience of eating the cookie. Remember to tell this as part of a story.



Compare your list to this one. Do you have some of the same words and phrases?

- aroma of rich chocolate
- creamy, appetizing, tasty and delicious
- crunchy wafer
- moist, sweet filling
- smooth and creamy in the mouth
- senses struck dumb and mute
- fudgy, gummy, sticky, chewy



- cookie decorated with dark delectable designs
- mouth waters
- icing like butter turning slowly to cream in my mouth
- sweetness lingers long after the cookie is gone
- better than a warm blanket on a winter's day



I rummaged through the vast kitchen; my stomach complaining of its emptiness. Was there anything in this house to eat? Suddenly I spotted it. Pleasure made my hands tremble. The package of Oreos was as beautiful as rain is to a fireman. I quickly ripped the cellophane. The aroma of rich chocolate reached my senses. My mouth drooled. I twisted the cookie apart and licked the sugary, smooth filling. The icing was like butter turning slowly to cream in my mouth. Its sweetness was better than a warm blanket on a winter's day.




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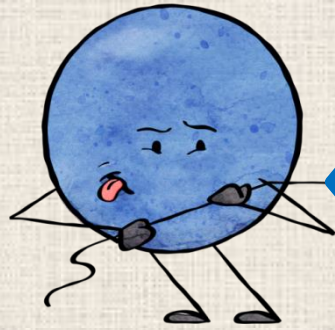


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Credits

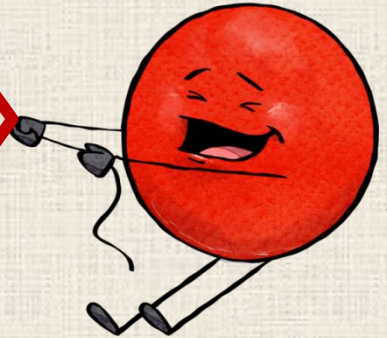




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