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Show Not Tell

ANGRY

Instead of telling the reader that the character is angry, we can show how they are angry, by describing their facial expressions, body language, actions and speech. We can also use figurative language to paint a vivid picture.

Facial Expressions

- Lips pursed
- Teeth or jaw clenched
- Squinting eyes
- Grinding teeth
- Frowning
- Glaring at someone or something
- Veins popping out or pulsating
- Red in the face
- Nostrils flared
- Shaking head
- Rolling eyes
- Furrowed brows
- Blood-shot eyes

Body Language and Actions

- Clenched fists
- Shaking
- Trembling
- Tense muscles
- Arms crossed
- Stomping feet
- Slamming things
- Glaring
- Hands on hips
- Heart racing or pounding
- Covering head with hands
- Getting hot
- Stormed out
- Heavy breathing
- Acting impulsively

Speech and Sounds

- Screamed
- Shouted
- Sighed
- Yelled
- Roared
- Hissed
- Barked
- Spat
- Bellowed
- Growled
- Squawked
- Fumed
- Vented
- Seethed
- Raged
- Erupted
- Scolded
- Snapped
- Shrill voice
- Shaking voice

Figurative Language

- Steam was coming from their ears
- Their blood was boiling
- They erupted like a volcano
- They foamed at the mouth
- They flew off the handle
- They went ballistic
- They went through the roof
- Kicked themselves
- Eyes like daggers
- They saw red
- They burned inside
- They exploded

Show Not Tell

SCARED

Instead of telling the reader that the character is scared, we can show how they are scared, by describing their facial expressions, body language, actions and speech. We can also use figurative language to paint a vivid picture.

Facial Expressions

- Lips trembling
- Biting lips
- Crying/tears flowing down cheeks
- Teeth chattering
- Wide eyes
- Pallid or pale
- Colour drained from face
- Mouth dropped open
- Dry mouth

Body Language and Actions

- Shaking/trembling body/hands
- Tense muscles
- Heart racing or pounding
- Covering eyes with hands/closed eyes
- Heavy breathing
- Panting or breathing quickly
- Cowering/hiding
- Biting fingernails
- Tight chest
- Sweating
- Clammy skin
- Fainting
- Unable to move
- Backing away slowly
- Bolting
- Goosebumps

Speech and Sounds

- Whimpered
- Cried
- Pleaded
- Gasp
- Wept
- Whispered
- Stuttered
- Choked
- Shaking voice
- Quivering voice

Figurative Language

- Their heart was in their mouth
- Their mouth dropped to the floor
- Butterflies in their stomach
- Their thoughts raced
- Their stomach dropped/twisted
- Their eyes popped out of their head
- Their knees were jelly
- They jumped out of their skin
- Shivers ran down their spine
- Their blood ran cold
- Their hairs stood on end
- Shaking like a leaf

Show Not Tell

SAD

Instead of telling the reader that the character is sad, we can show how they are sad, by describing their facial expressions, body language, actions and speech. We can also use figurative language to paint a vivid picture.

Facial Expressions

- Lips trembling
- Pouting
- Biting lips
- On the brink of tears
- Eyes welling up
- Crying/tears flowing down cheeks
- Blood-shot eyes
- Swollen, red eyes
- Puffy eyes
- Head drooped
- Looking at the ground

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Body Language and Actions

- Shaking/trembling body/hands
- Body slumped
- Covering eyes with hands
- Unable to move
- Curled up in a ball
- Hugging knees
- Moping around
- Wanting to be alone

Speech and Sounds

- Whimpered
- Cried
- Wept
- Stuttered
- Choked
- Wailed
- Sobbed
- Mumbled
- Muttered
- Bawled
- Sighed
- Sniffling
- Shaking voice
- Quivering voice

Figurative Language

- They had a lump in their throat
- Their heart was aching
- Their heart sank
- They fell to pieces
- They were reduced to tears
- They were empty inside

Show Not Tell

HAPPY

Instead of telling the reader that the character is happy, we can show how they are happy, by describing their facial expressions, body language, actions and speech. We can also use figurative language to paint a vivid picture.

Facial Expressions

- Bright eyes
- Grinning
- Beaming smile
- Smile spread across their face
- Couldn't stop smiling

Body Language and Actions

- Jumping up and down
- Bouncing
- Skipping jubilantly
- Clapping hands
- Dancing
- Alert
- Thumbs up
- High-fiving

Speech and Sounds

- Exclaimed
- Chuckled
- Cheered
- Joked
- Howled
- Laughed
- Giggled
- Sang
- Hummed
- Whistling

Figurative Language

- Smile from ear to ear
- They had a sparkle in their eye
- They were on cloud nine
- Their eyes lit up
- They were over the moon
- They were on top of the world
- Their heart leapt
- Their heart swelled

Show Not Tell

EMBARRASSED

Instead of telling the reader that the character is embarrassed, we can show how they are embarrassed, by describing their facial expressions, body language, actions and speech. We can also use figurative language to paint a vivid picture.

Facial Expressions

- Blushing
- Flushed cheeks
- Avoiding eye contact/looking away
- Holding back the tears

Body Language and Actions

- Shying away
- Cowering/hiding
- Running away
- Fidgeting
- Tugging at their sleeves
- Covering face with hands

Speech and Sounds

- Stuttered
- Mumbled
- Muttered
- Murmured
- Whispered
- Speak quietly or not at all

Figurative Language

- Wanted to disappear
- Wanted the ground to swallow them up
- They had butterflies in their stomach
- Their stomach was churning
- Their cheeks were on fire

Show Not Tell

PROUD

Instead of telling the reader that the character is proud, we can show how they are proud, by describing their facial expressions, body language, actions and speech. We can also use figurative language to paint a vivid picture.

Facial Expressions

- Bright eyes
- Grinning
- Toothy grin
- Smile spread across their face
- Couldn't stop smiling

Body Language and Actions

- Standing tall
- Hands on hips
- Head held high
- Puffing/sticking out chest
- Strutting
- Parading
- High-fiving

Speech and Sounds

- Exclaimed
- Declared
- Boasted
- Bragged
- Announced
- Shouted
- Giving praise

Figurative Language

- Smile from ear to ear
- They had a sparkle in their eye
- Their eyes lit up
- They were over the moon
- They were on top of the world
- Their heart swelled
- They were glowing
- They had a beaming smile

Show Not Tell

BRAVE

Instead of telling the reader that the character is brave, we can show how they are brave, by describing their facial expressions, body language, actions and speech. We can also use figurative language to paint a vivid picture.

Facial Expressions

- Determined or serious look on their face
- Lips pursed
- Looking straight ahead

Body Language and Actions

- Standing tall
- Hands on hips
- Head held high
- Puffing/sticking out chest
- Fists clenched
- Pumping fists
- Ready for battle or a challenge
- Primed
- Focused
- Taking risks
- Looking/being strong
- Making quick decisions
- Leading people/taking care of others
- Alert

Speech and Sounds

- Exclaimed
- Declared
- Announced
- Shouted
- Roared
- Bellowed
- Boomed

Figurative Language

- They plucked up the courage
- Their heart swelled
- They were like a lion

Show Not Tell

COLD

Instead of telling the reader that the character is cold, we can show how they are cold, by describing their facial expressions, body language, actions and speech. We can also use figurative language to paint a vivid picture.

Facial Expressions

- Nose running
- Nose turns red
- Lips trembling
- Blue lips
- Eyes watering
- Teeth chattering
- Icicles hung from their hair/beard
- Face tingling

Body Language and Actions

- Shivering
- Body shaking uncontrollably
- Blowing into clasped hands
- Rubbing hands together
- Hugging themselves
- Drinking warm drinks
- Putting on warm clothes
- Struggled
- Seeking shelter
- Stepping into a hot shower
- Stamping feet to keep warm
- Goosebumps

Speech and Sounds

- Grumbled
- Mumbled
- Muttered
- Murmured
- Grouched
- Complained
- Whined
- Whispered
- Moaned
- Protested
- Chattered
- Struggling to speak
- Their voice grew weaker

Figurative Language

- The bitter wind lashed their skin
- The air froze in their lungs
- Their breath hung in the air
- They were freezing to death
- They were shaking like a leaf
- They were frozen solid
- Their hairs stood on end

Show Not Tell

HOT

Instead of telling the reader that the character is hot, we can show how they are hot, by describing their facial expressions, body language, actions and speech. We can also use figurative language to paint a vivid picture.

Facial Expressions

- Sweat dripping from forehead
- Bright red face
- Tongue hanging out
- Sweaty upper lip
- Squinting eyes

Body Language and Actions

- Heavy breathing/panting
- Clammy hands
- Wiping their sweat
- Fanning themselves
- Drinking water or cold drinks
- Removing items of clothing
- Burning skin
- Seeking shade
- Stepping into a cold shower
- Putting on suncream
- Dizzy/disorientated

Speech and Sounds

- Panted
- Sighed
- Protested
- Whimpered
- Cried
- Mumbled
- Muttered
- Grumbled
- Grouched
- Complained
- Whined
- Moaned
- Struggling to speak
- Their voice grew weaker

Figurative Language

- They were melting
- They were scorching
- They were soaked right through
- They were burning up
- The sun beat down on them
- It was like a sauna
- They were sweating bullets

Show Not Tell

TIRED

Instead of telling the reader that the character is tired, we can show how they are tired, by describing their facial expressions, body language, actions and speech. We can also use figurative language to paint a vivid picture..

Facial Expressions

- Blood-shot eyes
- Red swollen eyes
- Puffy eyes
- Rubbing eyes
- Struggled to keep eyes open
- Head drooped
- Looking at the ground

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Body Language and Actions

- Yawning
- Stretching
- Slouching
- Slumping in seat
- Trudging
- Body slumped
- Body aching
- Trying to stay awake
- Checking the time
- Rubbing eyebrows
- Their head dropped into their hands

Speech and Sounds

- Sighed
- Protested
- Whimpered
- Grouched
- Cried
- Wept
- Stuttered
- Choked
- Wailed
- Sobbed
- Mumbled
- Muttered
- Bawled
- Sighed
- Sniffling
- Shaking voice
- Quivering voice
- Struggling to speak
- Their voice grew weaker

Figurative Language

- Their eyes grew tired
- They had bags under their eyes
- They looked into the middle distance
- They were half asleep
- They were out like a light
- They were worn out
- They were ready to drop
- They were drained
- Their bed was calling them
- They were on their last legs