

Show, Don't Tell

- To create an interesting story, the writer needs to show not tell the reader about people, places, and things they are writing about.
- Showing creates mental pictures in the reader's mind.
- When readers get a clear picture, they are more engaged in the writer's story.

Telling

- Provides information in a general, non-specific way
- Written in a dull and lifeless manner
- Tells the reader what happened and what was thought

Showing

- Engages the reader through description of actions, movements, and appearances
- Uses active verbs, adjectives, expressions, and adverbs
- Uses sensory words that describe sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell
- The reader experiences the story as if he's there

Tell: The pizza was delicious.

Show: Mushrooms and pepperoni sausage formed thick layers on top of one another while the white mozzarella cheese bubbled over the bright red tomato sauce. Each time I took a bite I planned it so that I got a taste of every luscious ingredient. My taste buds celebrated every single time! Oooh, so good.

Tell: It was an unusual cat.

Show: With yellow eyes glowing red, long, black fur that stood on end, a mouth full of sharp pointed teeth that emitted a yowl like a tiger, I knew that the small animal before me was no ordinary cat.

Tell: Jack was afraid.

Show: Jack felt his stomach muscles tighten. He flattened himself to the wall, the gritty bricks against his cheek. Sweat chilled his palms.