

WRITING PIECE 1 - FEEDBACK

Section 1:

#1 (First paragraph): Strengths:

- Vivid sensory details capture the atmosphere of the beach
- Strong use of metaphors with "watercoloured canvas" and "holding its breath"

Weakness: Limited emotional connection → Your writing focuses heavily on describing the setting but misses opportunities to show Lucas's feelings about summer ending. Phrases like "had the beach all to himself" could be deepened to reveal his thoughts about this solitude.

Exemplar: *Lucas savoured having the beach to himself, a bittersweet privilege that marked summer's farewell.*

#2 (Second paragraph): Strengths:

- Builds suspense gradually through physical sensations
- Effective pacing of the discovery scene

Weakness: Underdeveloped discovery moment → Your description of finding the jar moves too quickly from discovery to examination. The phrase "something unusual caught his touch" could be expanded to build more anticipation.

Exemplar: *His fingers trembled as they traced the smooth surface of what lay buried beneath the sand, his curiosity growing with each gentle sweep.*

#3 (Third paragraph): Strengths:

- Creates mystery through detailed description of the symbols
- Strong ending that leaves readers wondering

Weakness: Rushed conclusion → Your final paragraph speeds through Lucas's reaction to finding the mysterious note. The phrase "Lucas shivered" could be developed to show more of his emotional response.

Exemplar: *A chill ran down Lucas's spine as he studied the strange symbols, torn between the urge to decode their message and the nagging feeling that some mysteries were better left unopened.*

■ Your story shows promise in creating an atmospheric beach scene and introducing an intriguing mystery. However, you could deepen Lucas's character by showing more of his thoughts and feelings throughout the narrative. Consider adding more internal dialogue to help readers connect with Lucas's experience of finding the mysterious jar.

Actionable task: Rewrite the third paragraph focusing on Lucas's emotional journey as he discovers the contents of the jar, ensuring to include his specific thoughts and internal reactions to each new detail he uncovers.

Score: 42/50

Section 2:

#1 On the last day of summer, Lucas had the beach all to himself. The air felt thick with the salty tang of the ocean and the weight of the waning season. The sun, heavy and warm, hung low in the sky, casting a watercoloured canvas of crimson and orange hues across the horizon. The water, reflecting the vibrant colours, rippled gently with the fading light. Lucas felt a strange stillness, as though the world was holding its breath for the end of summer.

#2 He was half-buried in the sand, his fingers working aimlessly through the grains as he built a final sandcastle, the tower crumbling with every attempt. But then, something unusual caught his touch—something solid, cool, and oddly smooth. It wasn't a rock, nor was it a shell, but a small glass jar, its surface worn and cloudy with age. ~~A soft scraping sound echoed in the silence as he dug around it, the last of the sunlight casting long, angular shadows across the sand.~~ [As he dug around it, a soft scraping sound echoed in the silence, whilst the last of the sunlight cast long, angular shadows across the sand.]

#3 His heart quickened as he uncorked the jar, revealing a folded piece of paper inside. The note was covered in delicate, looping symbols that shimmered like they had a life of their own. The language was foreign, indecipherable—too strange to be just gibberish, but too familiar to be random. The ocean breeze stirred, making the paper feel almost...alive. Lucas shivered, looking around as if expecting someone to be watching, but there was nothing—only the endless stretch of the beach, the crashing waves, and the haunting whisper of the wind.

WRITING PIECE 2 - FEEDBACK

Section 1:

#1: "Every night, as if on a timer at midnight, the stars above the village would dim for one full minute. A moment of pause in the sky, like a candle snuffed in the dark. Only Liam seemed to notice, though."

Strengths:

- Strong opening hook with precise timing detail
- Effective use of simile comparing stars to a candle

Weakness: Limited sensory details → Your description focuses mainly on visual elements. Phrases like "dim for one full minute" and "like a candle snuffed" could be enhanced by including other senses to make the scene more immersive.

Exemplar: *Every night at midnight, the stars above the village dimmed for one full minute, leaving behind a silence so deep Liam could hear his own heartbeat. A moment of pause in the sky, like a candle snuffed in the dark.*

#2: "His father used to say Liam thought too much, that he was always chasing after answers that weren't there. 'The stars won't save you,' he'd say, his voice heavy with the weight of his own unspoken regrets."

Strengths:

- Strong character development through dialogue
- Meaningful subtext about father-son relationship

Weakness: Unexplored emotional depth → Your dialogue reveals tension but doesn't fully explore Liam's response. The phrase "unspoken regrets" hints at deeper conflict that deserves more development.

Exemplar: *His father would say Liam thought too much, always chasing answers that weren't there. "The stars won't save you," he'd snap, his voice heavy with unspoken regrets. Liam would bite his tongue, knowing his father's bitterness came from his own abandoned dreams.*

#3: "What he did know was that the stars were trying to tell him something, and it had to be him to listen."

Strengths:

- Creates intrigue and mystery

- Shows protagonist's determination

Weakness: Underdeveloped motivation → Your ending leaves Liam's urgency unexplained. The phrase "had to be him" needs more context about why Liam feels this responsibility.

Exemplar: *What he knew, deep in his bones, was that the stars were trying to tell him something vital - something only he, with his lifetime of watching and waiting, could understand.*

■ Your narrative creates an intriguing mystery but needs deeper emotional connections. You've built a fascinating premise with the flickering stars, but you could strengthen Liam's personal stake in this phenomenon. Try weaving in more specific details about why this matters so much to him. Your story would benefit from showing how this mystery affects his daily life and relationships.

Actionable task: Rewrite the final paragraph focusing on connecting Liam's star-watching to a specific personal loss or unfulfilled dream that drives his obsession.

Score: 41/50

Section 2:

#1 Every night, as if on a timer at midnight, the stars above the village would dim for one full minute. A moment of pause in the sky, like a candle snuffed in the dark. Only Liam seemed to notice, though.

#2 He sat on the edge of the porch, a blanket loosely draped over his shoulders, eyes fixed upon the heavens. The flicker came quietly, almost imperceptibly—like a breath held too long. The village, sound asleep, would never see it. But Liam always did. For as long as he could remember, Liam had watched the stars, utterly convinced they told him something he just couldn't quite understand.

#3 ~~His father used to say Liam thought too much, that he was always chasing after answers that weren't there.~~ [His father used to tell Liam he thought too much, always chasing after answers that weren't there.] "The stars won't save you," he'd say, his voice heavy with the weight of his own unspoken regrets.

The village rested easy in its ignorance. People were content in their simple lives; ~~with~~ [in] the familiar paths they ~~tacked~~ [tracked] each and every day. But Liam couldn't forget the flicker. It felt like a sign. A warning. Or maybe an invitation. He wasn't sure.

What he did know was that the stars were trying to tell him something, and it had to be him to listen.

INTERVIEW

Section 1:

#1 (First paragraph about being a good student) Strengths:

- Comprehensive view of student qualities beyond academics
- Strong emphasis on personal growth and lifelong learning

Weakness: Limited concrete examples → Your response about being a good student would benefit from specific examples. Phrases like "brings the knowledge learned into his real life" need real-world illustrations to make your answer more compelling and memorable.

Exemplar: ***"Being a good student means applying classroom concepts to real situations - like using statistics learned in maths to analyse local environmental data, or applying psychology concepts to improve my study techniques."***

#2 (Second paragraph about unfair treatment) Strengths:

- Shows empathy and moral courage
- Presents multiple approaches to addressing unfairness

Weakness: Vague action steps → Your response lacks specific examples of how you would take action. The phrase "speak out or advocate for change" needs more detail about exactly what steps you would take.

Exemplar: ***"When I witnessed a classmate being excluded from group work, I spoke to our teacher privately and suggested implementing a rotating group system to ensure everyone had equal opportunities to participate."***

#3 (Third paragraph about Leonardo da Vinci) Strengths:

- Clear reasoning for choosing da Vinci
- Thoughtful questions that show genuine interest

Weakness: Surface-level engagement → Your discussion of da Vinci focuses mainly on well-known facts. The phrase "painted the infamous Mona Lisa" could be replaced with more unique observations about his work and legacy.

Exemplar: ***"I would ask da Vinci about his detailed anatomical studies and how they influenced both his scientific understanding and his artistic techniques, particularly in works like the Vitruvian Man."***

■ Your answers show good basic understanding but could dig deeper into personal experiences and specific examples. Try to connect your responses more directly to your own life and experiences. Add more details about how you would actually implement the ideas you discuss. Your answers would be stronger if you expanded each response with concrete situations you've encountered.

Score: 41/50

Section 2:

#1 Being a good student requires much more than good grades. Being a good student means development of curiosity, embracing challenges, and learning from failure. A good student relates ~~himself/herself~~ [themselves] with course materials, brings the knowledge learned into ~~his~~ [their] real life, and seeks chances to grow intellectually and personally. It also includes responsibility, time management, and self-motivation, balanced with collaboration. A good student isn't afraid to ask questions, say when ~~he~~ [they] ~~doesn't~~ [don't] understand anything, or seek help if that's what's required. Ultimately, it's all about instilling a kind of mindset in the way of lifelong learning, whereby success is defined not by attainment but by growth.

#2 ~~I do feel a call to action every time I find out that somebody has been treated unfairly.~~ [When somebody is treated unfairly, I feel compelled to act.] I try to assess the situation and the whole context, then intervene if it's safe and appropriate. It can be as basic as supporting the affected person with words of comfort, a listening ear, or standing with them in their battle. In those other situations where the injustice is systemic or larger, I may speak out or advocate for change through peaceful means, such as writing, petitions, or ~~organizing~~ [organising]. ~~Fairness is not a moral but rather a collective responsibility.~~ [Fairness is not just a moral principle, but a collective responsibility.]

#3 I would meet Leonardo da Vinci, ~~the guy who~~ [who] painted the ~~infamous~~ [famous] Mona Lisa. He was a genius in art, science, and engineering, and I would ask him how he managed such extraordinary curiosity across so wide a range of fields. I'd want to understand how he balanced his scientific observations with his artistic endeavours, and how he managed to maintain an open mind throughout his life. I'd also ask him what advice he would give to modern thinkers who feel confined by the specialisations that define contemporary knowledge. His perspective on integrating art and science could offer valuable insights for today's complex world.