

Section 1:

#1: Opening paragraphs Strengths: Your opening line with "Crash!" creates an immediate hook that grabs attention. You establish the unusual premise quickly and clearly. Weakness: Limited sensory details → While your opening effectively introduces the strange shadow, you could enrich the reader's experience by including more sensory details about how the shadow appears and moves, making the supernatural element more vivid for readers. Exemplar: *Crash! Liam's pencil case hit the floor with a deafening bang. He stared in shock, not at the scattered pens, but at his pitch-black shadow, which had stretched independently and knocked it off his desk.*

#2: School scene Strengths: Your scene creates relatable tension through the awkward situation of getting in trouble for something beyond Liam's control. Weakness: Underdeveloped emotional response → You mention that "Liam didn't" laugh along with his friends, but there's an opportunity to deepen the reader's connection by exploring how this situation made him feel internally—his frustration, embarrassment or confusion. Exemplar: *His friends giggled behind their hands, but Liam's cheeks burned with embarrassment. He sank lower in his chair, his stomach knotting as the teacher's stern gaze fixed on him. How could he explain that he wasn't controlling his own shadow?*

#3: The revelation and resolution Strengths: Your use of the storm creates atmospheric tension, and the revelation about the apology letter adds meaningful depth to the story. Weakness: Rushed understanding → Liam's realization that his shadow is trying to help him comes quite suddenly. You could expand on his moment of understanding to show his thought process more clearly. Exemplar: *Liam stared at the crumpled letter, remembering how he'd walked away from Max after their argument. A wave of guilt washed over him as he finally understood—his shadow wasn't tormenting him, it was reflecting the conscience he'd been trying to ignore.*

■ Your piece showcases wonderful creativity with its supernatural element serving as a clever metaphor for conscience. The story has a complete narrative arc with a meaningful resolution. To improve the substance of your writing, consider deepening Liam's emotional journey throughout. How does his relationship with his shadow evolve from fear to understanding? Also, you could expand key moments to build more tension,

particularly during the storm scene when the revelation occurs. Your dialogue feels natural but adding more of Liam's internal thoughts would strengthen the reader's connection to him. Additionally, you might develop the friendship with Max slightly earlier in the story so readers feel more invested in their reconciliation. The moral of doing the right thing comes through nicely, but showing more of Liam's resistance before acceptance would create a more satisfying character growth arc.

Overall Score: 42/50

Section 2:

Crash! Liam's pencil case hit the floor with a loud bang. He stared in shock, not at the case, but at his shadow, which had knocked it off his desk.

#1: It was a sunny Tuesday morning, and Liam had just woken up. Everything seemed normal, until he noticed his shadow waving at him from the wall. At first, he laughed. "Very funny," he said, thinking his eyes were playing tricks. But when he brushed his teeth, his shadow stuck out its tongue. When he got dressed, it spun in circles.

Something was wrong.

#2: At school, things got worse. Liam's shadow copied the teacher and made silly faces during maths. His friends giggled, but Liam didn't. He got in trouble for "being cheeky" even though he wasn't doing anything. He didn't know what to say. How do you explain that your shadow has a mind of its own?

"Why are you doing this?" Liam whispered in the playground. His shadow just danced on the ground, shaking its head. Liam didn't understand. Shadows were meant to follow, not lead.

#3: That night, a storm rolled in. Rain tapped the windows, and thunder rumbled like a hungry belly. Liam sat in bed, thinking. Was he losing his mind?

Suddenly, a flash of lightning lit up his room. Liam gasped. His shadow was standing by the window, not on the floor, and not connected to his feet.

It turned and pointed to his desk, where a crumpled letter lay. Liam hadn't finished it. It was an apology to his best friend Max. They'd argued last week, and Liam had never said sorry. His shadow picked up the pen and pointed again.

Liam finally understood.

His shadow wasn't bad, it was trying to help him do the right thing.

He grabbed the pen and finished the letter. The moment he wrote the last word, the shadow stepped back into place. It followed him again, quietly and calmly.

The next morning, Liam handed the letter to Max.

"Thanks," Max said, smiling.

Liam smiled too. As they walked to class, the sun followed them, and so did their shadows, just as they should.