

Writing Feedback

TERM 2 | WEEK 2 WRITING | 12th May | Y5 SCHOLARSHIP

#1 (First paragraph and beginning of second) Strengths: Your atmospheric opening creates immediate tension with the resistant door. Your sensory details are vivid - especially the "scent of time itself: aged parchment, damp stone, and the sharp smell of ink."

Weakness: Sentence variation → Most sentences follow similar patterns, which makes the pacing feel monotonous. For instance, "A cool breath escaped the gap" and "I hesitated for a moment" both begin with subject-verb constructions. You could vary sentence structure to create a more dynamic rhythm that matches the exploratory nature of your story.

Exemplar: *I hesitated, letting the musty air fill my lungs, before stepping forward into the unknown darkness that seemed to stretch endlessly before me.*

#2 (Middle paragraphs about the library's interior) Strengths: Your personification of books as "weary travelers" creates a powerful image. The description of the chandeliers with "spiderwebs draped across them like forgotten shoelace" gives readers a clear visual of neglect.

Weakness: Underdeveloped sensory experience → While you've included strong visual and smell details, other senses like sound, touch, and temperature could be more consistently woven throughout. For example, you mention "The sound was swallowed instantly," but don't fully explore what the protagonist hears (or doesn't hear) in this silent space.

Exemplar: *My footsteps echoed softly against the stone floor, each step sending tiny clouds of dust dancing around my ankles while the chill of centuries seeped through my clothes.*

#3 (Final paragraphs with mysterious presence) Strengths: You build suspense effectively with the gradual introduction of sounds and the feeling of being watched. The contrast between the quiet library and the mysterious rustling creates tension.

Weakness: Character reaction depth → The protagonist's emotional response to discovering they're not alone could be more deeply explored. While you mention "pulse

quickenings" and "skin prickling," we don't get deeper insight into their thoughts or feelings beyond physical reactions.

Exemplar: *Fear gripped me, not the fleeting kind that comes with sudden surprises, but the deep, primal dread of being watched by something that shouldn't exist in this forgotten place.*

■ Your piece creates a wonderfully eerie atmosphere with strong visual imagery. To improve the content, try adding more variety to your sentence structures - mix short, punchy sentences with longer, flowing ones to create rhythm. Also, build deeper connections between the setting and your character's emotions. How does this ancient library make them feel beyond just fear? Try adding small details about why they're there and what they hope to find. This will make readers care more about what happens next.

Score: 42/50

Section 2:

The Forgotten Library

The door resisted at first, its warped wood clinging to the frame as if reluctant to reveal what lay beyond. Then, with a groan—long and low, like a sigh of something ancient—it yielded. A cool breath escaped the gap, carrying with it the scent of time itself: aged parchment, damp stone, and the sharp smell of ink long dried upon brittle pages.

#1 I hesitated for a moment, letting the musty air fill my lungs, as if breathing it in might somehow help me understand this forgotten place. My flashlight flickered, its golden beam shining through the heavy gloom. Rows upon rows of books towered before me, standing like ~~sentinals~~ [sentinels], their spines cracked and curled with age. Some leaned against their neighbors, like weary travelers at the end of a long adventure. Dust clung to them in thick layers, disturbed only by the faint shiver of air that stirred the silence.

The library stretched outward in all directions, vanishing into the shadows where the light could not reach. Chandeliers, their metal dulled beneath decades of filth, hung from a vaulted ceiling lost in the void above. Spiderwebs draped across them like forgotten ~~shoelace~~ [shoelaces], trembling slightly in the stillness. The room hummed—not with

sound, but with presence, with the quiet pulse of a place that had not been touched for centuries, yet remained alive.

#2 I stepped forward, my boot pressing into the film of dust upon the stone floor. The sound was swallowed instantly, absorbed by the silence like a drop of ink vanishing into thirsty parchment. Somewhere deep within the maze of shelves, a single page fluttered, its dry whisper slicing through the hush. I held my breath.

The scent of mildew thickened as I moved between towering bookcases. The wooden frames had swelled with age, their surfaces rough beneath my fingertips. I traced the faded gold lettering of a spine, its once-bright filigree dulled by time and neglect. The cover flaked at my touch, releasing a sigh of dust into the air.

At the heart of the room stood an immense wooden desk, its surface scarred with ink stains and deep scratches. A candle, long extinguished, sat atop it, wax frozen in thick, uneven rivulets cascading down its sides. The melted drips glistened faintly in the dim light, like petrified tears. I reached out to brush the surface, trailing my fingers along the grooves left by quills that had scratched ideas onto parchment long ago.

#3 Then—just as I reached for a book resting open upon the desk—a sound. Faint, distant—like the shift of parchment or the creak of old leather. It was soft but deliberate.

I swallowed hard, my pulse quickening. My flashlight flickered again, casting jagged shapes across the walls. The library felt alive—not in a way that books and words should, but in something deeper. Something watching.

Then, another sound. A faint rustling, the scrape of movement just beyond the bookshelves. I turned, sweeping my flashlight toward the source, but the shadows swallowed my light before it reached anything. The silence thickened, pressing against my ears.

I took a step back, my breath shallow, my skin prickling with the feeling that I was no longer alone.