

## Section 1:

#1 "In the middle of the hot, windy desert, there was a small, dusty tent. Inside it, Athena sat quietly, holding a shiny hourglass that had once belonged to her mum. The glass was smooth and round, and the sand inside sparkled like shooting stars. It was the only thing left from her mum, who had disappeared on an adventure many years ago."

Strengths: Your opening paragraph creates a vivid setting and introduces the protagonist with her special object. The contrast between the "dusty tent" and "shiny hourglass" effectively highlights the importance of the hourglass.

Underdeveloped character background → Your introduction mentions Athena's mum disappearing "many years ago" but doesn't provide enough context about how this affects Athena emotionally. Adding a brief insight into her feelings would help readers connect with her situation from the start.

***Athena sat quietly, holding a shiny hourglass that had once belonged to her mum, running her fingers over its smooth surface as memories of her mother's laugh filled her with both warmth and longing.***

#2 "Athena came back every year to the same place, hoping to find a clue. She believed the hourglass was special. It wasn't just a decoration—it felt like it had something to say. Every time she turned it, the sand would fall softly, like a soothing whisper. But today, something strange happened. The sand stopped."

Strengths: You've built suspense effectively with the short sentence "The sand stopped" and created an intriguing moment that pulls readers into the story. The personification of the hourglass "having something to say" gives it character.

Limited sensory details → Your description focuses mainly on what Athena sees, but adding how the tent smells, the temperature, or the texture of objects would create a more immersive experience. Including additional sensory information would help readers feel more present in the scene.

***Every time she turned it, the sand would fall softly, like a soothing whisper, and the gentle hissing sound would blend with the desert winds that carried the scent of sun-baked earth through the thin tent walls.***

#3 "Shaking, Athena looked around and saw a small bump under the floor of the tent. She dug with her hands and found a rusty, old tin box. Inside was a notebook—her mum's journal, full of drawings, notes, and stories about her last journey. There were maps, strange symbols, and a message saying: "For Athena, when you are ready."

Strengths: This discovery moment is powerful and rewarding. Your description of the journal's contents creates curiosity and expands the story world with "maps" and "strange symbols."

Rushed emotional reaction → You mention Athena is "shaking" but move quickly to the discovery without fully exploring her emotional response to finding this connection to her mother. Slowing down this moment would increase its emotional impact.

*With trembling hands, Athena carefully opened the rusty tin box, her breath catching in her throat as she recognised her mother's handwriting on the weathered journal inside, each page a precious link to the woman she had missed for so long.*

■ Your piece shows great potential with its magical elements and emotional core about a daughter connecting with her missing mother. The hourglass as a magical object works well, but you could strengthen the emotional journey of your main character. Focus on developing Athena's feelings throughout the story - her loneliness at the beginning, her excitement during the discovery, and her hope at the end. Additionally, try to slow down important moments by adding more details about Athena's thoughts and physical reactions. You might also consider expanding on the mother's character through specific memories Athena has of her, which would make their connection more meaningful for readers. Your ending is strong with its hopeful tone, but you could make it even more powerful by connecting it more clearly to Athena's growth or change from the beginning of the story. Including more specific details about what Athena plans to do next would give readers a stronger sense of where the story might go.

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**Overall Score: 41/50**

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Section 2:

**Title: The Magic Hourglass**

In the middle of the hot, windy desert, there was a small, dusty tent. Inside it, Athena sat quietly, holding a shiny hourglass that had once belonged to her mum. The glass was smooth and round, and the sand inside sparkled like shooting stars. It was the only thing left from her mum, who had disappeared on an adventure many years ago. #1

Athena came back every year to the same place, hoping to find a clue. She believed the hourglass was special. It wasn't just a decoration—it felt like it had something to say. Every time she turned it, the sand would fall softly, like a soothing whisper. But today, something strange happened. The sand stopped. #2

Everything went still.

The hourglass almost looked like it was thinking, waiting with her. Athena's heart thudded in her chest like a drum. The wind outside howled, and the tent flapped like giant wings. She remembered what her mum once said: "When time stops, you'll know where to begin."

Shaking, Athena looked around and saw a small bump under the floor of the tent. She dug with her hands and found a rusty, old tin box. Inside was a notebook—her mum's journal, full of drawings, notes, and stories about her last journey. There were maps, strange symbols, and a message saying: "For Athena, when you are ready." #3

The hourglass wasn't broken. It had done its job.

It didn't mean time was running out. It meant she had found what she was meant to. The hourglass had changed. It wasn't just a memory anymore. It was a guide—a path forward.

Athena smiled through tears. She didn't feel lost now. She felt ready.

Time hadn't ended.

It had finally shown her where to start.