

Section 1:

#1 - Opening paragraph with thunder and lightning description

Strengths: Your opening creates immediate atmosphere with strong sensory details like "thunder silenced the crowd" and "lightning shook light poles and hearts." The contrast between the lively gathering and sudden storm works well to grab attention.

Weakness: Unclear character motivation → Your writing doesn't explain why Mara's speech matters or what she hopes to achieve. The phrase "deliver a small speech at the town gathering" is too vague. Readers need to understand what's at stake for Mara beyond just giving any speech. This makes it harder to care about her struggle.

Exemplar: *"Mara stood frozen as the storm destroyed her chance to convince the council about the new playground proposal."*

#2 - Grandmother flashback sequence

Strengths: The memory creates a nice connection between past and present. Your use of specific details like "seven years old" and "grandmother's porch" helps readers picture the scene clearly.

Weakness: Choppy sentence flow → Your sentences feel disconnected and jump between ideas too quickly. Phrases like "That brief vision, triggered by the sound, the rain, the electric scent in the air. It had brought clarity" create awkward stops that interrupt the reading flow. The ideas don't connect smoothly from one to the next.

Exemplar: *"The brief vision, triggered by the storm's familiar sounds and scents, brought sudden clarity to her confused mind."*

#3 - Final paragraph with crowd response

Strengths: Your ending shows character growth as Mara overcomes her fear. The image of people returning despite the storm demonstrates her success.

Weakness: Confusing cause and effect → Your writing suggests the storm stops because Mara speaks, but this connection isn't clear or believable. The phrase "The storm eased as she spoke, as if listening" creates confusion about what's really happening. Also, "darkness swallowed all hope" contradicts the positive ending where people are inspired.

Exemplar: *"As Mara's confident voice carried across the square, people began gathering closer, drawn by her courage rather than deterred by the weather."*

■ Your piece shows good instincts for creating atmosphere and building tension through weather imagery. The basic story structure works well, moving from problem to memory to solution. However, your writing needs clearer connections between ideas and more specific details about what Mara actually wants to achieve. Additionally, some sentences need smoother transitions to help readers follow your thoughts more easily. Try expanding on why this speech matters to Mara and her community. Also, work on making each sentence flow naturally into the next one. Your ending could be stronger if you focus on realistic outcomes rather than magical thinking about storms listening to speeches. Consider revising the grandmother's advice to connect more directly to Mara's current situation.

Overall Score: 39/50

Section 2:

A Daring Speech

#1 The first crash of thunder silenced the crowd. In that moment, every cheer and whispered conversation vanished, swallowed by the sky's trembling voice. Lightning shook light poles and hearts.

#2 That's when the wind surged into chaos. Rain pounded the plaza like drumming fists. The crowd scattered. Vendors abandoned their stalls. Mara stood there frozen as the storm took her chance away. Her goal was to deliver a small speech at the town gathering ~~but~~ [, but] all hope ~~has~~ [had] collapsed under the storm's power.

As a gust flung water into her face, a faint image flickered. A flash of sea breeze, of childhood summers. She was seven years old, watching the angry storms roll off her grandmother's porch. Wind whispered secrets past her ear as Mara's eyes lit up at every strike of lightning. She saw her grandmother's hand resting on her shoulder while thunder cracked overhead. That time, fear had gripped her until Grandma whispered, "The storm passes, dear. So do the troubles."

~~That brief vision, triggered by the sound, the rain, the electric scent in the air. It had brought clarity.~~ [That brief vision, triggered by the sound, the rain, and the electric scent in the air, had brought clarity.]

Snapping back, Mara inhaled a lungful of storm~~laced~~ [-laced] air. She ~~realized~~ [realised] her task wasn't ruined [;] it was transformed. Instead of timidly calling people back under cover, she raised her voice, letting it carry across the storm~~rattled~~ [-rattled] square.

"Friends! This storm reminds us how quickly calm can flee, but it also shows us how power returns. Stand with me!"

#3 Her speech, carried with honesty and rooted in memory, drew people back to her side. ~~Shelter mattered less than connection.~~ [Connection mattered more than shelter.] The storm eased as she spoke, as if listening. Everyone clapped [.] ~~her~~ [Her] daring bravery ~~leading~~ [had led] a speech even while the darkness swallowed all hope. Mara was the spark to the fire in the darkness.