

MEMORISING ALL YOUR HOMEWORK

REWRITE

Inner Thoughts & Feelings

Advanced Writing Challenge

Timed Writing Prompt:

First sleep-over at a friend's house—show excitement and worry without naming the emotions.

A mini-lesson in advanced writing technique for students

Advanced Writing Techniques

HOOK (ATMOSPHERE
CHARACTERISATION
CLUES
TRIGGER SYMBOL

COMPLICATION

DEEP
EMOTIONAL
TURMOIL

PHYSICAL PROBLEMS

MORE
CIRCUMSTANCES



BODY REACTIONS

Learning Objectives

INNER THOUGHTS AND CONFLICTS

- Master **advanced techniques** to show inner thoughts & feelings without directly naming emotions
- Respond to **challenging writing prompts** under time pressure with sophisticated language
- Analyse exemplars using **assessment criteria** to elevate writing quality
- Apply **literary devices** to convey complex emotional states indirectly
- Develop a **toolkit of strategies** for showing rather than telling in creative writing

Success Criteria:

Writing that demonstrates mastery of subtle emotional conveyance without relying on explicit emotion words.

Advanced Writing Techniques: Introduction

- Depicting **inner thoughts and feelings** is essential for creating compelling characters

Example: "The invitation sat on the table, its gold trim catching the light. James circled it twice, fingers twitching, before finally reaching for his phone."

- Skilled writers **show rather than tell** when conveying emotional states

Telling: "Sarah was nervous about the exam."

Showing: "Sarah's pencil tapped an erratic rhythm against the desk as her eyes darted between the clock and her blank answer sheet."

- Advanced writing uses **subtle techniques** that help readers experience emotions alongside characters

Weather mirroring: "As his hopes faded, the last rays of sunlight disappeared behind gathering storm clouds."

Symbolic objects: "Her fingers traced the worn edges of the photograph, lingering on each familiar face."

- Evaluators look for **emotional depth** without explicit emotion-naming

Instead of: "She was heartbroken"

Advanced: "The once-cherished necklace now felt like a stone against her skin, cold and heavy."

- Top writers create **emotional resonance** through action, thought, dialogue and sensory detail

Action: "His hand trembled as he reached for the door."

Sensory: "The sickly-sweet smell of hospital antiseptic made his stomach clench."

Why This Matters:

Mastering these techniques elevates writing from basic to sophisticated, creating memorable work that resonates with readers on a deeper level.

Strategy Flowchart: How to Show Internal States

Brain Science Fun Fact



*Research shows that readers' brains engage more deeply when they must **infer emotions** rather than being directly told how characters feel!*

Writing Strategy Flowchart

1. Identify the emotion

Know what you want to convey, but don't name it



2. Show physical reactions

Describe what happens in the body (racing heart, sweaty palms)



3. Reveal thought patterns

Share what the character notices, worries about, or hopes for



4. Add sensory details

Use environment and sensations to reinforce the emotional state

Quick Check:

If you've written "excited" or "worried" directly, challenge yourself to rewrite using these strategies!

Demonstration: Show vs Tell

goosebumps

Examples

Example 1: First Sleepover

Tell: "I was nervous about my first sleepover."

Show: "My hands could not keep still, fingers tapping a silent rhythm on my sleeping bag as I triple-checked the contents of my rucksack."

Example 2: Anticipation

Tell: "I was excited to watch the film."

Show: "The film countdown began, and I perched on the edge of the sofa, my eyes wide, breath held, as the screen faded to black."

Key Techniques

- Use **physical reactions** that naturally accompany emotions
- Include **thought patterns** that reveal internal states
- Let **actions and behaviours** demonstrate feelings
- Describe **sensory details** that reflect emotional atmosphere
- Create **contrast** between character's behaviour and situation

Remember:

Readers connect more deeply with writing that allows them to experience emotions alongside characters, rather than simply being told what to feel.

Replaying the day's events- backwards, forwards,
Physical Manifestations of Feeling

Body Language Clues

- Twisted sheets and fidgeting fingers show restlessness
- Darting glances and wide eyes signal alertness
- Hunched shoulders reveal tension
- Hurried footsteps indicate urgency
- Frozen posture suggests shock or fear

Sound Cues

- Breath catching in throat
- Heartbeat loud in ears
- Voice quivering or changing pitch
- Muffled laughter or stifled sounds
- Environmental sounds amplified by focus

Five Senses Framework

Using Sensory Details to Show Feelings

- **Sight:** Colours seem brighter when we're happy, duller when sad
- **Sound:** Ambient sounds fade or intensify depending on emotional state
- **Touch:** Skin sensitivity changes with stress levels
- **Smell:** Familiar scents trigger emotional memories
- **Taste:** Food flavours change with emotional states

Writer's Technique

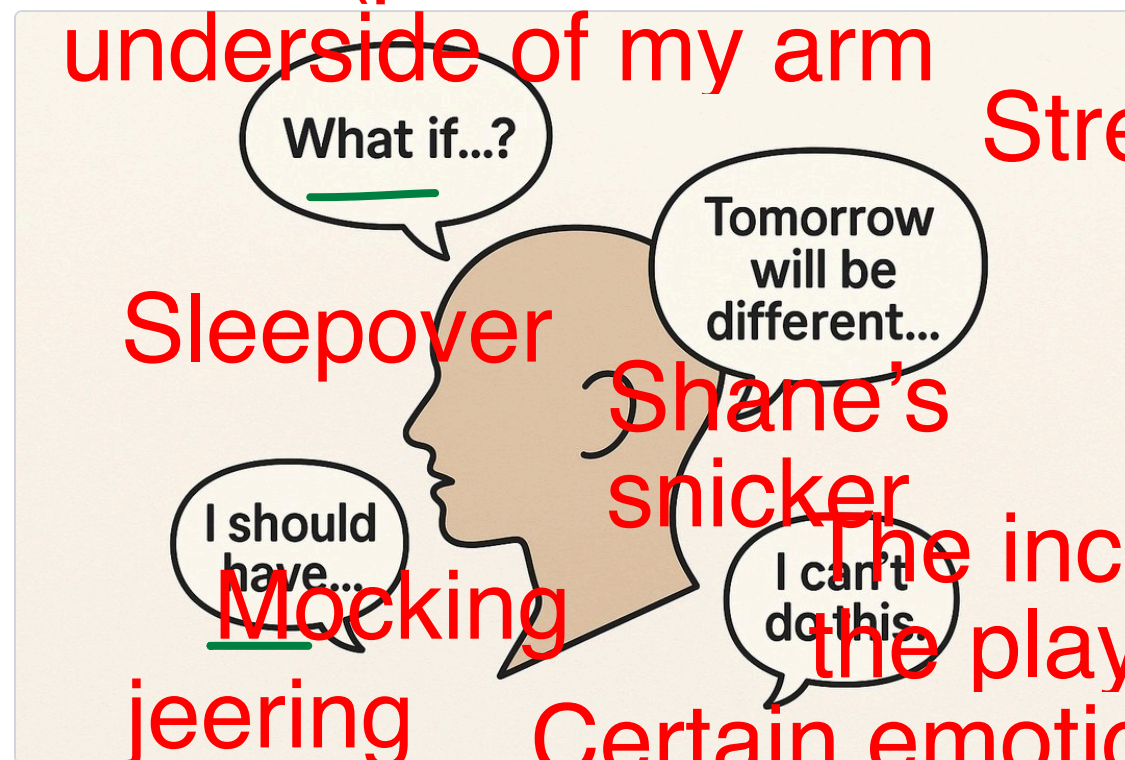
Match sensory descriptions to the character's emotional state without directly naming the emotion. A room that feels "suffocating" tells readers more than stating "the character felt anxious."

Blue light of broken pixels on the TV bulged at me

Inner Dialogue & Indirect Thought

SOFA (patch of faux leather)- tickled the underside of my arm

Stream of consciousness



Effective Inner Dialogue Techniques

- Use **fragmentary thoughts** that trail off with ellipses...
- **Self-questioning** reveals doubts and concerns
- Include **memory snippets** that connect to emotions
- Create **thought patterns** that circle back to key concerns
- Mix **short and incomplete** sentences to show mental state

Reader Connection Tip:

Internal thoughts create intimacy between reader and character. The reader becomes the only one who truly knows what's happening inside the character's mind.

Example Techniques

"What if nobody talks to me? What if... What if I can't sleep and everyone else does? Tomorrow would be so—"

Fragmented anxious thoughts show worry without naming it

"Mum's chocolate chip cookies. Dad's silly bedtime stories. My own pillow. My night light..."

Listing comforts from home reveals homesickness

Certain emotions are connected to certain body parts

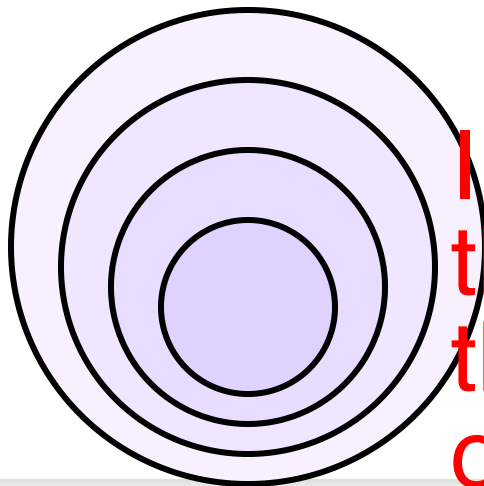
I wiggled my fourth finger in the hole of the leather, pulling on a loose string

Trigger symbols

I pressed my fleshy thumbs on the tv remote, scampering to hear every word

Strategy Flowchart: Building Emotional Layers

The 'Emotion Onion' Concept



I brushed
the
thoughts
out of my
mind...

Remember: **Peel the emotion onion**, don't squish it. Layer your writing to reveal feelings gradually rather than stating them directly.

Kayla's gaze
Jordan's laugh
Board games

Writer's Tip:

Remember that just like a real onion, your reader should discover each layer as they "peel" through your writing. The deeper they go, the stronger the emotional impact.

Emotional Layer Strategy

Layer 1: Physical Signals

Body language, physiological responses (racing heart, tense muscles, fidgeting hands)



Layer 2: Focus & Thought Patterns

What the character notices, obsesses over, or tries to avoid thinking about



Layer 3: Sensory Details

How surroundings seem amplified or diminished based on emotional state



Layer 4: Subtle Action

Decisions and behaviours that reveal inner feelings without naming them

Small micro signals

Micro expression

Poor Exemplar: Analysis

The Example

"I was so excited for my first sleepover at Jake's house. But I was also really worried about being away from home. I packed my bag and felt nervous. When my mum dropped me off, I was happy but scared too. Jake's mum was nice and that made me feel better. We played games and I was having fun but I also missed my own bed when it was time to sleep."

This sample directly states emotions rather than showing them through thoughts, actions, and sensory details.

Discussion Points:

How could the writer have shown these emotions without directly naming them? Which details would make the scene more vivid? What physical reactions might reveal the character's feelings?

Common Mistakes

- ✗ **Directly stating emotions:** "excited," "worried," "nervous," "happy," "scared"—telling instead of showing
- ✗ **Simple vocabulary:** Basic word choices create flat, underdeveloped writing
- ✗ **Basic sentence structure:** Similar patterns with little variation in length or complexity
- ✗ **Limited details:** Few sensory elements or specific descriptions of surroundings
- ✗ **Surface-level character development:** Reader gains little insight into deeper thoughts

Improved Exemplar: Analysis

The Example

"My heart raced as I packed my overnight bag for Jake's house. I double-checked my list three times and carefully folded my favourite pyjamas. When Mum's car pulled into Jake's driveway, my stomach tightened into knots. Jake's mum greeted us with biscuits that smelled like cinnamon and vanilla, and I managed a small smile. We built a blanket fort and played video games, but when the lights went out, I stared at the unfamiliar ceiling and clutched my pillow from home. The shadows looked different here."



Discussion Points:

What techniques does this writer use to suggest feelings without naming them? How could the paragraph be further improved? Which details most effectively convey the character's emotional state?

Improvements & Development Needs

- ✓ **Some physical reactions:** "heart raced," "stomach tightened into knots" show feelings rather than naming them
- ✓ **Sensory details:** "smelled like cinnamon and vanilla," "shadows looked different" create atmosphere
- ✓ **Actions reveal feelings:** "double-checked my list three times," "clutched my pillow"
- **Still some telling:** "managed a small smile" implies emotion rather than showing it fully
- **Limited character insight:** Could develop deeper thoughts and conflicting emotions

Advanced Techniques: Elevating Writing

- **Subtlety Techniques:** Using literary devices, motifs, and foreshadowing to hint at emotions without stating them
- **Atmosphere Creation:** Employing sensory layering, weather as mood, and environmental cues to establish emotional context
- **Character Depth:** What's left unsaid can be as powerful as what is said—using silences, pauses, and small gestures
- **Implied Emotion:** Creating emotional resonance through carefully selected details that readers can interpret
- **Contrast & Juxtaposition:** Setting up opposing elements to create emotional tension and complexity

Expert Insight:

"Sophisticated writers don't tell readers what to feel—they create experiences that evoke feelings naturally."

Strategy Flowchart & Meme: Avoiding 'Telling' Pitfalls

The 'Emotion Police' Alert!



EMOTION POLICE

WANTED

For direct emotion naming crimes:

- ✗ "I was excited"
- ✗ "She felt worried"
- ✗ "They were angry"

***Spot & Stop** emotion-naming in your writing!*

Revision Checklist

1. Circle emotion words

Scan your draft and highlight all direct emotion terms (happy, sad, angry)



2. Physical replacement

Substitute with physical reactions (racing heart, sweaty palms, clenched jaw)



3. Inner thought integration

Add thoughts that reveal the emotion ("What if everything goes wrong?")



4. Test with a reader

Can they identify the emotion without you naming it?

Quick Hack:

Use the Find function (Ctrl+F) in your document to search for emotion words like "happy," "sad," "excited," "worried," "angry," etc. Then challenge yourself to rewrite each instance!

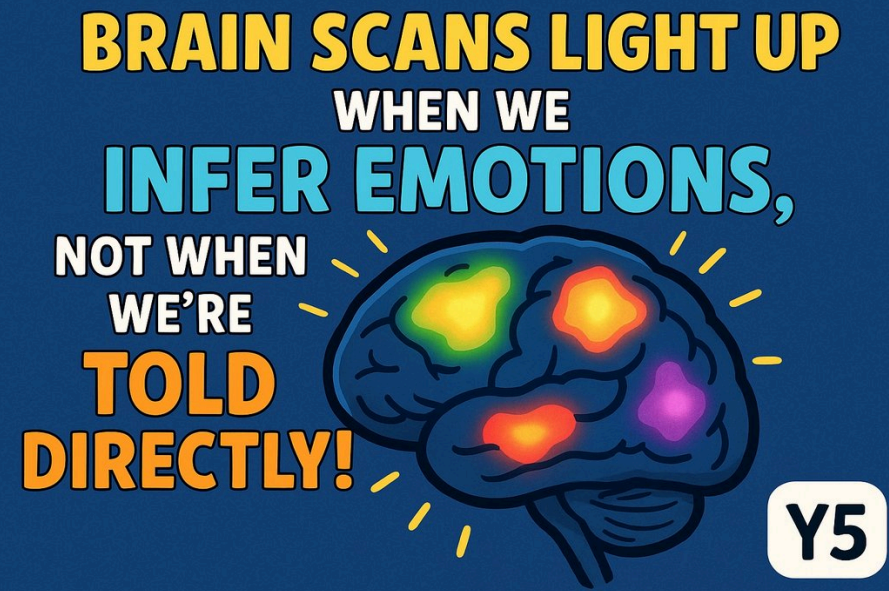
Model Exemplar: Without Emotion Words

First Sleepover

The invitation from Alex had sat on the refrigerator for three days, held by a magnet shaped like a pineapple. Every time Thomas passed by, his fingers drummed against his leg and his stomach performed a peculiar flip. His mother had already packed his overnight bag, which now waited by the front door like a sentinel. Within its depths lay his toothbrush, pyjamas, and—tucked secretly between his folded clothes—his small stuffed dragon that no one at school knew about.

"Five minutes until we leave," called his mother from the kitchen. Thomas stood frozen before the mirror, adjusting and readjusting his hair. He rehearsed his greeting to Alex's parents for the sixth time, then checked the zipper on his bag for the fourth. His palms left damp prints on the fabric. Outside, the afternoon sun stretched long shadows across the pavement, signalling the approach of evening—the first he would spend away from his own bed.

The car journey passed in a blur of houses and trees. Thomas's leg bounced rhythmically against the seat while scenarios played through his mind: What if Alex's dog didn't like him? What if he spilt something at dinner? What if he couldn't fall asleep? Yet alongside these thoughts ran others—of midnight snacks, of sharing secrets in whispers, of being treated like one of the big kids at last. As they pulled into Alex's driveway, Thomas's heart raced at such speed that he was certain it must be visible through his shirt.



Techniques Used

- Physical manifestations (fingers drumming, stomach flip, heart racing)
- Symbolic objects (stuffed dragon, sentinel bag)
- Layered sensory details (damp palms, long shadows)
- Internal thought patterns (what-if scenarios)
- Contrasting thoughts (worries alongside anticipation)
- Advanced vocabulary (peculiar, sentinel, rehearsed)
- Varied sentence structures (simple, complex, compound)

Independent Timed Task

Your Writing Challenge

TASK: Write a paragraph about a first sleep-over at a friend's house. Convey both excitement and worry **without explicitly naming any emotions**.

Requirements:

- Include at least **three advanced techniques** from today's lesson
- Use **physical manifestations** to show internal feelings
- Include some form of **inner dialogue or indirect thought**
- Create **sensory details** that reflect the character's emotional state



Time Allocation:

15 minutes for planning, writing, and reviewing your work

Focus on Quality:

Remember to review your work, checking that you've shown feelings through actions, thoughts, and descriptions rather than stating them directly.

Self-Assessment Rubric

Use this checklist to rate your own writing:

Category	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Show, Don't Tell	Directly names emotions in writing	Sometimes shows emotions through actions or descriptions	Consistently shows emotions without ever naming them
Physical Manifestations	Few or basic physical reactions described	Several appropriate physical reactions included	Subtle and nuanced physical reactions that reveal complex feelings
Inner Dialogue	Limited or on-the-nose thought patterns	Some effective use of internal thoughts	Rich internal dialogue with fragments, questions, and realisations
Sensory Details	Limited use of sensory information	Multiple senses engaged to set emotional tone	Layered sensory details that subtly reveal emotional states
Vocabulary & Devices	Simple vocabulary and few literary devices	Varied vocabulary and some effective devices	Sophisticated vocabulary with purposeful literary devices

Using This Rubric:

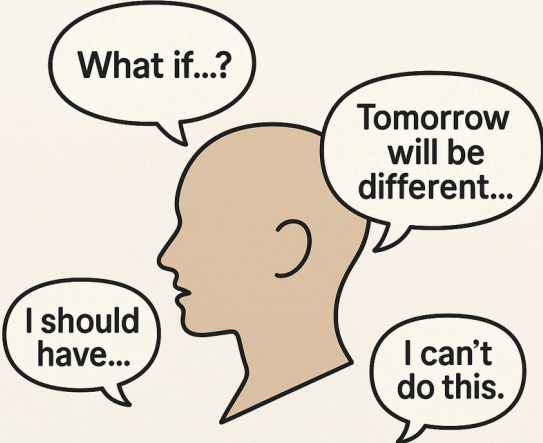
Circle where your writing falls in each category. For areas marked "Developing," revise your work using techniques from today's lesson to improve your writing.

Model Exemplar—Fully Annotated

The invitation from Alex had sat on the refrigerator for three days, held by a magnet shaped like a pineapple **S**. Every time Thomas passed by, his fingers drummed against his leg **P** and his stomach performed a peculiar flip **P**. His mother had already packed his overnight bag, which now waited by the front door like a sentinel **S**. Within its depths lay his toothbrush, pyjamas, and—tucked secretly between his folded clothes—his small stuffed dragon that no one at school knew about **S**.

"Five minutes until we leave," called his mother from the kitchen. Thomas stood frozen before the mirror, adjusting and readjusting his hair **P**. He rehearsed his greeting to Alex's parents for the sixth time **T**, then checked the zipper on his bag for the fourth **P**. His palms left damp prints on the fabric **Se**. Outside, the afternoon sun stretched long shadows across the pavement, signalling the approach of evening **Se**—the first he would spend away from his own bed.

The car journey passed in a blur of houses and trees. Thomas's leg bounced rhythmically against the seat **P** while scenarios played through his mind: What if Alex's dog didn't like him? What if he spilled something at dinner? What if he couldn't fall asleep? **T** Yet alongside these thoughts ran others—of midnight snacks, of sharing secrets in whispers, of being treated like one of the big kids at last **T**. As they pulled into Alex's driveway, Thomas's heart raced at such speed that he was certain it must be visible through his shirt **P**.



Mastery Checklist

- ✓ Physical reactions show anxiety (drumming fingers, frozen posture) and excitement (heart racing)
- ✓ Contrasting thought patterns reveal mixed emotions
- ✓ Symbol of hidden stuffed dragon reveals vulnerability
- ✓ Varied sentence structures maintain reader engagement
- ✓ No direct emotional labels - feelings shown through actions

Writing Tip:

Mix physical reactions, internal thoughts, and sensory details to create a multi-layered emotional portrayal that readers can experience rather than just observe.

Technique Legend

P Physical manifestations **Se** Sensory details **T** Inner thoughts **S** Symbolic objects