

## Section 1

### #1: Opening paragraph

#### Strengths:

- You've created a strong hook that immediately draws readers into your discovery, making them curious about what you found in the attic.
- Your sensory details about the telescope (the weight, the strange marks, how it glittered) help readers picture the object clearly.

**Vague time reference** → Your opening mentions "one summer" but doesn't give readers a clearer sense of when this happened or how old you were at the time. This makes it harder for readers to connect with your experience. Adding details like "the summer I turned twelve" or "last July" would help anchor your story and make it feel more real and specific.

**Exemplar:** *The summer I turned eleven, my brother, a group of friends, and I were clearing out my grandpa's attic when I came across something that totally changed the way I think about old things.*

---

### #2: Middle paragraphs (cleaning and discovering the initials)

#### Strengths:

- Your description of cleaning the telescope shows dedication and care for the object, which reveals your character development.
- The discovery of the initials "E.M." creates a powerful moment of connection between you and Captain Monroe.

**Underdeveloped emotional response** → When you find the initials carved into the telescope, you jump straight to imagining Captain Monroe on his ship. However, you haven't shared what you actually felt in that moment of discovery. Did your heart race? Were you surprised? Excited? Including your immediate emotional reaction would make this turning point in your story much more powerful and help readers feel what you felt.

**Exemplar:** *My breath caught in my throat when I noticed the tiny initials carved near the eyepiece: "E.M." A shiver ran down my spine—it was as if Captain Monroe had left his signature on the telescope in private, in anticipation of someone someday finding it and remembering him.*

---

### #3: Concluding paragraph

#### Strengths:

- Your reflection about the telescope being "not an object—it was a time machine" shows thoughtful insight about the meaning of historical artefacts.
- Ending with the telescope on your shelf creates a nice circular structure, bringing readers from discovery to present day.

**Rushed reflection** → Your final paragraph tries to wrap up too many ideas in a short space. You mention your English assignment, your teacher's feedback, the telescope's current location, and your larger realisation about old objects all within just a few sentences. This makes your conclusion feel hurried rather than meaningful. Spending more time on one or two of these ideas—perhaps focusing on what the telescope continues to teach you or a specific moment when you look through it now—would create a more satisfying and thoughtful ending.

**Exemplar:** *Now the telescope sits on my bookshelf between my favourite novels. On quiet afternoons, I take it down and hold its cool brass weight in my hands. I don't always look through it—sometimes I just trace the worn leather grip and imagine all the hands that held it before mine. Each scratch and dent tells a story I'll never fully know, but that's what makes it magical.*

---

■ Your piece captures a genuine moment of discovery and shows real curiosity about history and family stories. The telescope itself is a wonderful focus for your narrative, and you've done well to include specific details like the worn leather, the smell of salt and tobacco, and the carved initials. These concrete details make your writing come alive.

However, your narrative would benefit from slowing down in key moments. You move quickly from one event to the next—finding the telescope, talking to Grandpa, cleaning it, writing your assignment, and reflecting on its meaning—without spending enough time exploring your thoughts and feelings during these experiences. For instance, when Grandpa's eyes "glinted" and he began sharing the

telescope's history, what questions raced through your mind? What did his voice sound like? These deeper observations would add substance to your story.

Additionally, consider developing the middle section of your piece more fully. The paragraph about cleaning the telescope feels a bit thin compared to the rich possibilities it offers. You could describe the process in greater detail—what the tarnish looked like as you wiped it away, what you thought about while working, or whether anyone helped you or watched.

Also, think about strengthening the connection between different parts of your story. Your English assignment appears suddenly near the end without much context. If this assignment was important to your experience, you might weave it in earlier or explain why you chose to write about the telescope for school. This would help all the pieces of your narrative fit together more naturally and create a fuller, more complete story.

---

**Overall Score: 42/50**

---

## Section 2:

The Brass Telescope Mystery

**#1** My brother, a group of friends, and I were clearing out my ~~grandpa's~~ [grandfather's] attic one summer when I came across something that totally changed the way I think about old things. It was a brass telescope, buried in a worn wooden box with peeling carvings on the lid. I initially thought that it was just rubbish, but as I was about to grab it, I sensed that it was heavier than it appeared and had strange marks engraved on the metal. The brass was tarnished, but when the sun hit it in a particular manner, it glittered like gold.

I asked ~~Grandpa~~ [Grandfather], and his eyes glinted like I'd uncovered buried treasure. He told me it had belonged to his great-grandfather, Captain Elias Monroe, a ~~Pacific Ocean sailor~~ [sailor of the Pacific Ocean] of the late 1800s. ~~Captain Monroe had employed the telescope during his voyages over the ocean, I was informed.~~ [I learnt that Captain Monroe had employed the telescope during his voyages across the ocean.] ~~Grandpa~~ [Grandfather] told me it had peered out at islands no map had ever

shown and storms that swallowed whole ships. That blew my mind. I had something in my hands that had been on real adventures.

**#2** The telescope was old and slightly worn and had a peeling and cracked leather handle but still smelled of salt and old tobacco. Peering through it, the lens was a bit misty, but I could still see quite far out in the backyard, all the way to the red-colored [coloured] roof of our neighbor's [neighbour's] house. I wondered what Captain Monroe did see through it—whales, pirates, maybe sea monsters?

I devoted the rest of the afternoon to cleaning it using a soft cloth and a small metal cleaner. While I was cleaning, I noticed tiny initials carved near the eyepiece: "E.M." It was as if Captain Monroe had left his signature on the telescope in private, in anticipation of someone ~~some day~~ [someday] finding it and remembering him. I imagined him at the rail of a vessel, wind blowing through his beard, scanning for land or adventure.

Afterward, I wrote a short piece on the telescope for English. I named it *The Eye of the Sea*. My teacher described it as "imaginative and heartfelt," and I was happy. But in reality, the real tale was already written in the scratches and dents of that telescope. It was not an object—it was a time machine, a link to a person who lived a century ago.

**#3** Now the telescope sits on a shelf of my bookcase, in between my favorite [favourite] books. Occasionally I take it out and look through it, not to gaze into the distance, but so that I can be near the past. It reminds me that everything old has a story to tell, and occasionally, if ~~you are~~ [you're] lucky enough, you find yourself a part of it.