

Section 1

#1: "As the curtains opened and the lights swept across the stage, our school hall transformed into a lively green swamp. The air buzzed with excitement as the cast stepped into their roles for Shrek the Musical."

Strengths:

- Your opening sentence creates a vivid picture by showing the transformation of the hall into a swamp setting
- You've captured the atmosphere well by describing how the air "buzzed with excitement"

Vague Setting Description → While you mention the school hall transforming into a swamp, your writing doesn't help readers see what specifically made it look like a swamp. What did you actually see on stage? Were there props like lily pads or rocks? Did the lighting create a green glow? When you write "lively green swamp," it's quite general. Adding specific details about what your eyes noticed would help readers imagine they're sitting right beside you in the audience.

Exemplar: *As the curtains opened and spotlights bathed the stage in a murky green glow, our school hall transformed into Shrek's swamp. Cardboard trees lined the backdrop, and a painted wooden sign reading "Beware: Ogre" tilted at the stage's edge.*

#2: "From the very first song, the energy was contagious. The performers sang, danced, and acted with so much enthusiasm that it was impossible not to smile. But, like any live show, a few unexpected moments kept things interesting."

Strengths:

- You've effectively described the performers' enthusiasm and how it affected the audience
- Your transition to discussing mishaps flows naturally with the phrase "But, like any live show"

Missing Emotional Connection → Your paragraph tells us the energy was contagious and you couldn't help but smile, but it doesn't reveal how you personally felt during these moments. Did your heart race during the opening number? Did you feel nervous for the performers or proud of your

schoolmates? When you write "it was impossible not to smile," you're describing what happened rather than taking us into your experience. Sharing your specific feelings and thoughts would make readers connect more deeply with your perspective.

Exemplar: *From the very first song, my foot started tapping along to the beat. Watching my classmates pour their hearts into every note made my chest swell with pride, and I found myself grinning so widely my cheeks began to ache.*

#3: "By the final bow, the hall erupted with applause. The performance might not have been perfect, but it was full of joy, teamwork, and creativity. Watching from my seat, I realised that sometimes the best moments happen when things don't go exactly to plan."

Strengths:

- Your conclusion circles back to the theme of imperfection being part of the magic
- You've included a personal reflection that gives meaning to the experience

Underdeveloped Reflection → Your final realisation about the best moments happening when things don't go to plan is a lovely thought, but it arrives quite suddenly without showing us how you arrived at this understanding. What specifically during the performance made you think this way? Was it seeing the cast handle the fallen tree with humour? Was it the audience's warm reaction to the mistakes? Your conclusion jumps straight to the lesson without walking readers through the thinking process that led you there. Showing the journey of your thoughts would make your reflection feel more earned and meaningful.

Exemplar: *Watching from my seat, I thought about how the tumbling tree and slipping crown had made us laugh harder than any scripted joke. These unplanned moments had brought the audience and performers closer together, and I realised that sometimes the best memories happen when things don't go exactly to plan.*

■ Your piece captures the excitement of the school musical and celebrates the performers' resilience, which creates a warm, positive tone throughout. However, your writing stays quite close to the surface of the experience. You tell us that things were exciting and impressive, but you don't often show us why through specific examples. For instance, when you mention "the story's humour and heart," readers

would benefit from knowing which scene was particularly funny or touching. Additionally, your observations about what you saw are sometimes replaced by general statements—instead of describing exactly how Fiona’s crown slipped or what the background tree looked like, you move quickly past these moments. To strengthen your content, focus on zooming in on specific scenes, sounds, costumes, or reactions. Also, consider developing your thoughts more fully. When you mention being impressed by teamwork, you could explain what actions showed this teamwork—did cast members help each other? Did someone cover for another’s forgotten line? Your conclusion touches on an important idea about imperfection, but this theme could be woven throughout your piece rather than appearing mainly at the end. By adding concrete details and developing your observations into fuller paragraphs, your writing would offer readers a richer, more memorable experience of sitting in that audience with you.

Overall Score: 41/50

Section 2:

Title: A Swamp of Surprises: Our School's Shrek Musical

#1 → As the curtains opened and the lights swept across the stage, our school hall transformed into a lively green swamp. The air buzzed with excitement as the cast stepped into their roles for *Shrek the Musical*. Sitting in the audience, I could feel the anticipation all around me. Months of hard work had led to this moment, and everyone was eager to see it come to life.

#2 → From the very first song, the energy was contagious. The performers sang, danced, and acted with so much enthusiasm that it was impossible not to smile. ~~But, like any live show, a few unexpected moments kept things interesting.~~ [However, like any live show, a few unexpected moments kept things interesting.] Shrek’s microphone cut out mid-scene, Fiona’s crown slipped off during a twirl, and one of the background trees slowly tipped over. The audience giggled, but the cast stayed calm, turning each mishap into part of the fun.

What impressed me most was how well everyone worked together. Instead of losing focus, they carried on with confidence, proving how much effort they’d put into the show. The crowd cheered louder with every scene, completely caught up in the story’s humour and heart.

#3 → By the final bow, the hall erupted with applause. The performance might not have been perfect, but it was full of joy, teamwork, and creativity. Watching from my seat, I realised that sometimes the best moments happen when things don't go exactly to plan.