

Section 1

#1: "Maya and Jacob" section and the opening of "Maya's Project Failure"

Strengths:

- You've created a clear picture of the two main characters by describing their projects and personalities, which helps readers understand who they are right away.
- The side-by-side display detail ("Their displays stood side by side, glowing with lights, graphs, and screens") creates visual interest and sets up the physical closeness that becomes important later.

Unclear Cause-and-Effect Connection → When you write "Maya's project suddenly shut down mid-demonstration" and then later reveal it was simply an unplugged cord, the dramatic build-up doesn't match the simple cause. The way you've structured this makes readers expect something more significant than an accidental unplug. Consider showing earlier hints that someone was moving near the cords, or describe the crowded space around the booths, so the eventual cause feels more natural. A phrase like *"As students pressed closer to see the demonstrations, someone's foot caught on the tangle of cables beneath Maya's display"* would connect the crowded atmosphere you mentioned to the actual problem.

#2: "Sabotage?" section

Strengths:

- The rumour-spreading creates tension and shows how quickly stories can change in a school setting.
- Mr Patel's quick problem-solving demonstrates good adult presence in your story.

Missing Emotional Development → Your writing jumps quickly from the problem to the solution without exploring how Maya felt during those moments when everyone thought her project had failed. You mention "panic flashed across her face" but don't show us what she was thinking or doing while Mr Patel investigated. Did she try to restart it herself? Was she embarrassed in front of the judges? Adding 2-3 sentences here would make readers connect more deeply with Maya's experience. For example: *"Maya's hands trembled as she pressed the power button again and again, willing the screen to*

light up. Around her, she could hear whispers—had her algae fuel actually worked at all? Her cheeks burned as she caught sight of the judges making notes on their clipboards."

#3: "Honesty and Forgiving" through "Awards" sections

Strengths:

- Jacob admitting his mistake shows good character development and adds realism to your story.
- The joint first-place ending is unexpected and teaches a nice lesson about cooperation.

Rushed Resolution → The conflict builds nicely, but then resolves too quickly. Maya snaps at Jacob with "You should have checked before presenting!", which shows real anger, but then you immediately jump to the judges pausing the competition and both students resetting their work. You don't show us how Maya moved from being angry to accepting the joint award. Did they talk during the reset? Did a teacher help them see each other's perspective? Did Maya realise Jacob was genuinely sorry? Without this bridge, the "awkward smiles" at the end feel unearned. Try adding: *"During the reset, Ms Chen spoke quietly with both students. 'Accidents happen to everyone,' she reminded Maya, who was still fuming. Watching Jacob carefully reconnect her cables with shaking hands, Maya's anger began to fade. Maybe he really hadn't meant to cause trouble."*

■ Your piece tells an engaging story with a clear beginning, middle, and end, which is excellent work. The science fair setting feels authentic, and you've chosen interesting projects for both characters that sound realistic for Year 9 students. However, your writing would benefit from slowing down at key emotional moments. Right now, you move quickly through the plot events—problem happens, solution appears, conflict ends—but readers connect with stories through feelings, not just actions.

Think about the paragraphs where Maya's project fails and where she and Jacob resolve their conflict. These are your story's most important moments, but they're also your shortest sections. You could strengthen your writing by expanding these parts with internal thoughts and sensory details. What did Maya's hands feel like when she couldn't fix her project? What expression was on Jacob's face when he admitted his mistake?

Additionally, consider the pacing of your revelations. You build suspense with rumours of sabotage, but then immediately reveal it was just an accident. This deflates the tension rather than releasing it satisfyingly. You might introduce small clues earlier—perhaps mention the crowded space or someone stumbling—so the truth feels like a natural discovery rather than an anticlimactic explanation.

Your descriptive language is quite strong in places ("scrolling across the monitor in hypnotic lines of logic"), showing you can create vivid images. Apply this same attention to the emotional landscape of your story, and your writing will become much more powerful and memorable for readers.

Overall Score: 42/50

Section 2:

#1 Brooklyn High Annual Science Fair: The Most Dramatic One Ever

Each year, Brooklyn High's annual Science Fair sparks excitement, but this year's event turned into something no one expected. What began as a simple competition of ideas quickly escalated into one of the most dramatic afternoons our school has ever witnessed.

Maya and Jacob

It all started with two Year 9 students, Maya Lin and Jacob Turner, both known for their fierce intelligence and quiet rivalry. Maya was presenting a project on sustainable energy using algae-based fuel, while Jacob had created an AI system meant for predicting natural disasters. Their displays stood side by side, glowing with lights, graphs, and screens that hummed with ambition. The atmosphere buzzed with anticipation as students and judges travelled between the stalls, whispering thoughts about who would take home the first-place medal.

Maya's Project Failure

The drama began when Maya's project suddenly shut down mid-demonstration. Her laptop screen went black, and her bioreactor's pump halted. Panic flashed across her face as a crowd gathered. "It was working five minutes ago!" she exclaimed. Meanwhile, Jacob's project continued running smoothly, its code scrolling across the monitor in hypnotic lines of logic. As students pressed closer to see what had gone wrong, feet shuffled dangerously near the tangle of cables beneath both displays.] #2

Sabotage?

~~Rumours spread like wildfire.~~ [Rumours spread like wildfire through the hall.] Some students claimed Jacob had accidentally connected his AI to the wrong Wi-Fi channel, disrupting Maya's setup. Others whispered more dramatically that he had sabotaged her system on purpose. Teachers hurried to the booth, trying to calm the growing storm. Mr Patel, the Science Coordinator, knelt by Maya's project with a frown of concentration. Within minutes, he discovered the problem: Maya's extension cord had been unplugged during the crowd's excitement. Maya's hands had trembled as she pressed the power button again and again during the investigation, willing the screen to light up. Around her, she could hear whispers—had her algae fuel actually worked at all?]

Honesty and Forgiving

A hush fell over the room. Jacob stepped forward, guilt flickering briefly across his face, and admitted that he had tripped on the cord while adjusting his display. "I didn't realise," he said quickly, eyes wide. For a moment, it seemed the tension would break— but Maya's frustration boiled over. "You should have checked before presenting!" she snapped, voice trembling.

The judges, caught in the middle, paused the competition while both students reset their experiments. ~~The crowd, however, was not ready to let the incident go.~~ [During the reset, Ms Chen spoke quietly with both students about how accidents happen to everyone. Watching Jacob carefully reconnect her cables with shaking hands, Maya's anger began to fade—perhaps he really hadn't meant to cause trouble. The crowd, however, was not ready to let the incident go.] Students debated who was at fault, turning the science fair into a theatre of opinions and divided loyalties. Some admired Maya's resilience as she calmly recalibrated her sensors. Others sympathised with Jacob, who seemed genuinely regretful.

#3

Awards

By the end of the day, both projects ran perfectly. In an unexpected twist, the judges awarded them joint first place, praising their "innovation, perseverance, and scientific integrity." As the applause echoed through the hall, Maya and Jacob exchanged awkward smiles. What had started as rivalry ended in reluctant respect.

Conclusion

Looking back, the Great Science Fair Showdown wasn't just about who built the better invention—it was about grace under pressure, the fine line between competition and cooperation, and the unforgettable energy that fills a school when curiosity and pride collide.