

Section 1:

#1: "I should have known that the letter wasn't meant for me the moment I spotted my mum's delicate handwriting in ink only available during 1834 December 12 5:30 to 9:30."

Strengths:

- Your opening immediately creates mystery and draws readers in with the impossible situation of receiving a letter from someone who has passed away.
- The specific detail about the ink creates an interesting, magical quality to your story.

Weakness: Confusing Specificity → Your time reference "1834 December 12 5:30 to 9:30" is unclear and puzzling to readers. Is this meant to be a date in the 1800s, or December 12th, 1834 hours (military time)? The phrase "ink only available during" doesn't quite make sense—ink isn't usually available for only a few hours. This detail, whilst trying to show your character's precise nature, actually confuses readers rather than helping them understand the story. You want to show your character notices small details, but the detail itself needs to make logical sense.

Exemplar: *"I should have known that the letter wasn't meant for me the moment I spotted my mum's delicate handwriting in ink she'd bought on 12th December—the rare indigo shade only sold at the markets between 5:30 and 9:30 pm."*

#2: "My mother died 6 months 3 day and 12 hours ago and I'm not a person who believes in miracles. I'm the sort of person that reads every word in a receipt, keeps books in height and alphabetical order and arranges everything based on size and letters."

Strengths:

- Your character's personality comes through brilliantly—we can immediately picture someone who is extremely organised and detail-focused.
- The specific timing of your mother's death (6 months, 3 days, 12 hours) perfectly shows how your character thinks.

Weakness: Repetitive Character Description → You've told us about your character's organised nature, but then you list very similar examples that all show the same trait. "Arranges everything based

on size and letters" repeats the same idea as "keeps books in height and alphabetical order." This repetition doesn't add new information about your character. Instead of listing more examples of the same behaviour, you could explore *why* your character is this way, especially now that their mum has died, or show how this trait affects their feelings about the mysterious letter.

Exemplar: *"I'm the sort of person that reads every word on a receipt, keeps books in height and alphabetical order, and times my morning routine down to the minute. Since Mum died, keeping everything in order is the only thing that stops the world from feeling completely upside down."*

#3: "At the bottom it For Emma this is the real map the other ones just show you where things are."

Strengths:

- The message from your mum is touching and meaningful, showing how she saw the world differently from others.
- The contrast between "the real map" and maps that "just show you where things are" beautifully captures your mum's imaginative spirit.

Weakness: Incomplete Sentence Structure → Your sentence cuts off partway through—"At the bottom it For Emma" is missing words that would connect these pieces together. This makes readers stumble when they're trying to read a really important moment in your story. The message itself is lovely, but it's missing punctuation (like quotation marks or a colon) to show it's actually written on the map. This is the emotional heart of your piece, so you want the sentence to flow smoothly so readers can focus on the meaning rather than figuring out what the words say.

Exemplar: *"At the bottom, written in her distinctive handwriting, it said: 'For Emma—this is the real map. The other ones just show you where things are.'"*

■ Your piece has a genuinely touching core idea—a child who is very different from their imaginative mother receiving one last gift that shows how their mum saw the world. The contrast between your character's precise, organised personality and your mum's creative reimagining of the town is really effective and could be explored even more deeply. However, your writing would benefit from slowing down and letting readers sit with the emotions more. Right now, you move very quickly from opening the package to seeing the map, but you could expand the moment when your character first looks at

the map and begins to understand what their mum created. What does it feel like to see "The Palace of Infinite Doors" instead of "library"? Does it make your character sad because they can never see the world the way their mum did, or does it help them understand their mum better?

Additionally, your opening paragraph tries to pack in many precise details (the specific ink, the exact time since death, the 28.5 times walking past), which shows your character's personality, but some of these details pull readers out of the story because they're confusing or don't quite make sense. Choose the most important details that reveal character whilst still keeping the story clear. Your final paragraph feels rushed—you list the renamed places quickly, but this is where the magic of your story lives. Take time to describe two or three places in detail, letting readers see how your mum transformed ordinary locations into something meaningful. This would give your piece more depth and help readers connect emotionally with both your character and their mum.

Overall Score: 38/50

Section 2:

~~I should have known that the letter wasn't meant for me the moment I spotted my mum's delicate handwriting in ink only available during 1834 December 12 5:30 to 9:30. [#1 I should have known that the letter wasn't meant for me the moment I spotted my mum's delicate handwriting in ink she'd only bought once—on 12th December, between 5:30 and 9:30, from the rare ink merchant at the winter markets.] It was a gift from her mum's friends. It was either a miracle or a clerical mistake. [It was either a miracle, or some kind of postal mistake.] My mother died 6 months 3 day [days] and 12 hours ago and I'm not a person who believes in miracles. I'm the sort of person that reads every word in a receipt, keeps books in height and alphabetical order and arranges everything based on size and letters. [#2 I'm the sort of person who reads every word on a receipt, keeps books organised by height and alphabetical order, and arranges everything based on size and letters checks that all the tins in the cupboard face forward with their labels perfectly aligned.]~~

The package started getting dusty as it sat there on the kitchen table for 2 straight days. I walked and ran past it 28 and a half times (I was walking and I was halfway across the package and turned around) before opening it. ~~My mother would have torn it into a septillion little pieces of paper like confetti flying around the house.~~ [My mother would have torn it open immediately, sending a septillion little pieces of paper flying around the house like confetti.] When I finally opened it with a butter knife (I

~~couldn't find my butter knife)~~ [(I couldn't find my letter opener)] I saw a map of our town but not one that you could find at a shop. It was a town ~~how~~ [as] my mother saw it. The library was named ~~The~~ [the] Palace of ~~infinite doors~~ [Infinite Doors]; [and the] ~~The~~ primary school was named ~~academy~~ [the Academy] of ~~impossible questions~~ [Impossible Questions]. She ~~reimagined~~ [had reimagined] and transformed this ~~town~~ [entire town]. ~~At the bottom it For Emma this is the real map the other ones just show you where things are.~~ [#3 At the bottom, in her distinctive handwriting, it read: "For Emma—this is the real map. The other ones just show you where things are."]