

Section 1

#1: "I should've guessed the parcel wasn't mine when I saw Mum's handwriting on the front. It was loopy and uneven, like she'd written it while walking. She's been gone for seven years and some days—I forget the exact number—but getting mail from her felt weird."

Strengths:

- Your opening immediately creates mystery and pulls readers in by mixing something ordinary (a parcel) with something impossible (mail from someone who's been gone)
- The comparison "like she'd written it while walking" helps readers picture the handwriting clearly

Vague emotional language → Your phrase "felt weird" doesn't give readers enough detail about what you're actually feeling. Is it scary? Confusing? Hopeful? Sad? Right now, "weird" is doing too much work in your writing. When you write "Like a mistake. Or maybe something magical," you're getting closer to showing real feelings, but then you pull back again. Think about what receiving this parcel would truly make you feel in your body and heart, then use more specific words to share that with readers.

Exemplar: *Getting mail from her made my stomach flip—half hoping it was real, half afraid it wasn't.*

#2: "The package sat on the counter for a while. Two days, maybe three. I walked past it a bunch of times. I didn't count properly, but it was a lot."

Strengths:

- Your short sentences create a slow, hesitant feeling that matches how carefully you're treating this mysterious package
- The detail about not counting properly feels honest and realistic

Repetitive sentence structure → You've used very similar sentence patterns one after another: subject-verb-object in short bursts. "The package sat." "I walked past it." "I didn't count." While short sentences can be powerful, using too many in a row makes your writing feel choppy and a bit flat. Your

readers might lose interest because the rhythm becomes predictable. Try combining some of these ideas or varying how you start your sentences to keep readers engaged.

Exemplar: *The package sat on the counter for two, maybe three days, and each time I walked past—which was a lot, though I didn't count properly—I found a new reason to ignore it.*

#3: "I followed the roads with my finger. I'd walked them lots of times but never noticed the squirrels or the weird way the sunflowers leaned. Mum did. She always did."

Strengths:

- Your ending brings the story full circle by connecting the map back to your relationship with your mum
- The fragment "She always did" creates a lovely echo effect that emphasises your mum's special way of seeing the world

Underdeveloped emotional core → Your piece ends just when it should go deeper. You've shown us that your mum saw things differently and that the map reveals this, but you haven't explored what this means to you now or how it changes anything. Why does realising your mum noticed these things matter? Does it make you want to see the world differently too? Does it make you miss her more or feel closer to her? Right now, your ending just stops rather than truly concluding. Readers need to understand why this discovery is important to you, not just that it happened.

Exemplar: *I'd walked them lots of times but never noticed the squirrels or the weird way the sunflowers leaned. Mum did. She always did. Maybe if I looked at the world through her map, I'd start seeing what she saw—and it would feel a bit like having her back.*

■ Your piece has a gentle, thoughtful voice that draws readers into a quiet moment of grief and discovery. The central idea—a magical map from a deceased mother that shows the "real" town—is touching and full of possibility. However, your writing would benefit from going deeper into the emotional substance of this moment. Right now, you're telling us events (the parcel arrived, you opened it, you saw a map), but you're not fully exploring what these events mean to you as the narrator. Think about adding more internal thoughts and feelings throughout. For example, when you first see your mum's handwriting, what memories flood back? When you open the parcel and smell the rose, how does that scent make you feel? Your second paragraph, where the package sits unopened,

could expand to show your internal struggle—are you scared to open it? Hopeful? Additionally, your descriptions sometimes tell us what happened without showing us the sensory details that would make the moment come alive. Instead of "kind of crumbly" and "kind of sticky," try to be more specific and precise with your word choices. Also, the emotional climax of your piece—realising your mum saw the world differently—needs more development. What will you do with this knowledge? How does it change you? Give your readers a stronger sense of why this moment matters by exploring these questions more fully in your final paragraphs.

Overall Score: 41/50

Section 2:

#1 I should've guessed the parcel wasn't mine when I saw Mum's handwriting on the front. It was loopy and uneven, like she'd written it while walking. She's been gone for seven years and some days—I forget the exact number—but getting mail from her felt weird. Like a mistake. Or maybe something magical. I don't usually get magical things. I do get receipts, and I keep them all in a shoebox ~~labeled~~ [labelled] "Important-ish."

#2 The package sat on the counter for a while. Two days, maybe three. I walked past it a bunch of times. I didn't count properly, but it was a lot. Mum would've ripped it open straight away, probably with her fingernails. She never liked scissors. Said they were "too sharp for soft things."

When I finally opened it (with a butter knife that was kind of sticky), there was a map inside. Not a normal one. It was hand drawn, kind of crumbly, with faded ink and weird little drawings. A rose was stuck in the corner. A real one. It smelled like chocolate and dust.

It was our town, but not really. The school was called "Homework Prison." The lake was "Splashy Place." I smiled, sort of. Mum saw things differently.

At the bottom it said:

"For Amelia. This is the real town. The one you see is just pretend. Love, Mum."

#3 I followed the roads with my finger. I'd walked them lots of times but never noticed the squirrels or the weird way the sunflowers leaned. Mum did.

She always did.

Section 1

#1: "The pipe bellowed. Not one of the usual out of tune organ pipes, but an actual human scream."

Strengths:

- Your opening creates immediate intrigue by comparing the organ's sound to something unexpected and unsettling
- The short, punchy first sentence grabs attention effectively

Vague Sensory Description → Whilst you tell us the pipe sounds like a "human scream," your writing would be stronger if you showed us more about what kind of scream. Is it high-pitched or low? Does it rise or fall? Adding these details would help your readers hear exactly what you're describing. Right now, "human scream" is quite general and could mean many different sounds.

Exemplar: The pipe bellowed—not the usual wheeze of mistuned metal, but a shrill, throat-scraping shriek that clawed upward like someone falling.

#2: "The majestic grandeur of organ's loomed above us, it's millions of bristles varying from sizes of straws to trees as tall as households."

Strengths:

- Your comparison between different pipe sizes (straws to trees) helps readers visualise the organ's impressive scale
- The attempt to describe the organ's physical presence shows good attention to setting

Run-on Sentence Structure → This sentence tries to say too many things at once, making it difficult to follow. You've also got a grammar error with "organ's" when you meant "organs" (and "it's" when you meant "its"). Breaking this into two sentences would make your description clearer and easier to picture. The phrase "majestic grandeur" also repeats the same idea twice—both words mean impressive and grand.

Exemplar: The organ loomed above us in all its grandeur. Its millions of pipes varied from straw-thin whistles to columns as tall as houses.

#3: "The organist which played between the nine worlds astonishingly vanished, not leaving a single trace apart from his rusty old bench."

Strengths:

- The mention of "nine worlds" adds an intriguing fantastical element to your story
- The detail about the rusty bench being the only thing left behind is a nice specific touch

Incomplete Context and Unclear Connection → This information appears suddenly without enough explanation for your readers to understand what's happening. Who is this organist? What are the nine worlds? How does this connect to the screaming organ? Your writing jumps to this backstory without preparing us for it, leaving readers confused rather than informed. Additionally, the sentence following it ("The organ has been, -- merciful ever since, lashing absurd notes occasionally ever since") is incomplete and doesn't make sense as written.

Exemplar: Master Cordelias explained that the previous organist—a man who claimed to play music across nine mystical realms—had vanished without warning. "Ever since then," he said, "the organ has been temperamental, lashing out with strange notes."

■ Your piece shows promising imagination, particularly in its spooky atmosphere and the intriguing concept of a haunted organ. The relationship between the apprentice and Master Cordelias has potential for development. However, your writing would benefit from clearer organisation of ideas. Several paragraphs introduce information without proper context, leaving readers unsure how details connect to the main story. For instance, the paragraph about the vanished organist appears abruptly and needs better integration into the narrative flow.

Additionally, your descriptions sometimes tell us things are mysterious or grand without showing us why they matter to the story. The "waft of mystical air" and the complex chocolate-and-flowers smell don't clearly connect to what's happening with the screaming organ. Focus on descriptions that move your story forward rather than adding atmosphere for its own sake.

Your dialogue from Master Cordelias feels somewhat flat—his aggressive tone when identifying the note could be shown through his actions or word choice rather than just telling us he spoke aggressively. Also, your final sentence ("My hands trembled even more than before I reached for the organ for my first and last time") is confusing because the tense doesn't match—did this already happen or is it about to happen?

To strengthen your piece, work on connecting each paragraph to the one before it using clear transitions. Make sure every detail you include helps readers understand either what's happening or why it matters. Your sensory descriptions should deepen the mystery rather than distract from it.

Overall Score: 39/50

Section 2:

The pipe bellowed. Not one of the usual out of tune organ pipes, but an actual human scream. My perspiring fingers let loose of the organ, as I cringed back like I was being attacked by a supernatural being. Master ~~Cordelias~~ [Cordelia] didn't flinch, but instead he murmured "A B-flat, just as I expected" in an aggressive tone.

I'd been his apprentice for one month or so, but ~~enough~~ [long enough] to know that organs didn't scream notes [;] they whistle and wheeze but not scream. I lifted my nervously trembling jaw to ~~appoint~~ [voice] my ~~statement~~ [thoughts], but no words came out.

~~The majestic grandeur of organ's loomed above us, it's millions of bristles varying from sizes of straws to trees as tall as households. [~~**#2** ~~The organ loomed above us in all its grandeur, its millions of pipes varying from sizes of straws to trees as tall as households.] The air filled with dust, as a waft of mystical air filled the room. I smelt something odd and faintly bitter, like a piece of dark chocolate being left in a room full of crushed flowers.~~

The organ screamed again with a [the] voice of a terrified child and a decaying donkey all in one.

~~"The organist which played between the nine worlds astonishingly vanished, not leaving a single trace apart from his rusty old bench. The organ has been, -- merciful ever since, lashing absurd notes occasionally ever since. [#3 "The organist who played between the nine worlds vanished astonishingly, leaving not a single trace apart from his rusty old bench. The organ has been temperamental ever since, lashing out with absurd notes occasionally."]~~

My hands trembled even more than before ~~I reached~~ [as I reached] for the organ for my first and last time.