

Section 1:

#1 "I gulped in regret. After tearing up a package with my dead mother's tidy handwriting, I have just realised that the package probably wasn't for me."

Strengths:

- Your opening immediately creates curiosity by revealing a mistake with emotional weight
- The detail about "tidy handwriting" gives us a quick sense of the mother's character

Weak Opening Hook → Your first sentence relies on a simple emotion word ("regret") rather than showing us what that regret feels like through your actions or physical sensations. The phrase "I gulped in regret" tells us the feeling directly instead of letting readers experience it through vivid details. Additionally, the logic feels unclear—why would you tear open a package and only afterwards realise it wasn't for you? Wouldn't the address or name on the package tell you this before opening it?

Exemplar: *My hands froze mid-tear, brown wrapping paper dangling from my fingers. Mum's neat, slanted handwriting covered the label, but the name above the address wasn't mine—it was my sister's.*

#2 "But I'm not the sort of person who reads instructions or follows them anyway. I'm the sort that daydreams all the time and always bursts out laughing for no reason."

Strengths:

- You're establishing your narrator's personality with specific behaviours
- The casual, conversational tone matches the character's carefree nature

Vague Character Description → These two sentences try to tell us who you are through general statements rather than showing us through specific moments or examples. Phrases like "the sort of person" and "all the time" are too broad and don't create a clear picture. What do these daydreams look like? When did you last burst out laughing? Without concrete examples, your character feels flat rather than real.

Exemplar: *Last Tuesday, I stood in the supermarket and giggled at a potato that looked like my old headmaster. The woman next to me edged away. That's just how my brain works—always wandering somewhere strange.*

#3 "This was hand-drawn on thick paper that felt smooth and silky, with tiny illustrations on the sides: a compass drawn in a perfect circle, a stack of books next to the legend, mountains rendered in such detail you could almost feel their granite faces."

Strengths:

- You use sensory details effectively with "smooth and silky" and the visual descriptions
- The list of illustrations builds atmosphere and suggests the map is special

Missing Emotional Connection → Whilst you describe what the map looks like in careful detail, you don't connect these observations to what they mean or how they make you feel. You list the illustrations (compass, books, mountains) but don't explain why they matter or what story they might tell. The phrase "I didn't know my mother could be that artistic" appears after this sentence, but your surprise feels disconnected from the description itself. Why is discovering this artistry important? What does it reveal about your mother that you never knew?

Exemplar: *Mountains rose from the paper's edge, each peak shadowed so carefully I could trace Mum's patient pencil strokes. When had she sat down to draw these? When had she become someone who could create something this beautiful? I'd only ever known her as the woman who labelled everything and kept scissors in three different drawers.*

■ Your piece has a promising foundation with an interesting situation—discovering a mysterious package after your mother's death. However, the writing needs more depth to help readers truly connect with your experience. You often tell us information directly (like being a daydreamer) rather than showing us through specific scenes or moments. Think about adding more concrete examples: instead of saying you daydream "all the time," describe one particular daydream.

Additionally, your writing would benefit from exploring the emotions more deeply. You mention regret and surprise, but these feelings need room to breathe through description and reflection. What thoughts race through your mind when you realise your mistake? How does your body react?

Also, consider the logical flow of your story. Some details raise questions that aren't answered—why would you tear open a package without checking the name first? Working through these logic gaps will make your narrative more believable. Finally, try connecting your observations to their deeper meaning. When you describe the map's beautiful illustrations, link them to what you're learning about

your mother. What do these careful drawings reveal about a side of her you never saw? These connections between detail and meaning will give your writing the substance it needs to resonate with readers.

Overall Score: 40/50

Section 2:

~~#1 I gulped in regret.~~ [My hands froze, the torn wrapping paper hanging limp in my grip.] After tearing up a package with my dead mother's tidy handwriting, I ~~have~~ [had] just realised that the package probably wasn't for me. **#2** But I'm not the sort of person who reads instructions or follows them anyway. I'm the sort that daydreams all the time and always bursts out laughing for no reason.

The half-opened package sat on the kitchen counter for two days. I walked past it a few times before I opened it. My mother would have split the tape delicately with scissors, an expressionless face staring at whatever lay in the package. I am not my mother. I inherited her dark hair and her inability to whistle, but not her way of being a neat freak.

Finally, I couldn't resist but ripped the rest of the wrapping off. I found a map. Not a regular map, the kind you buy at petrol stations or download on your phone.. This was hand-drawn on thick paper that felt smooth and silky, with tiny illustrations on the sides: **#3** a compass drawn in a perfect circle, a stack of books next to the legend, mountains rendered in such detail you could almost feel their granite faces. I didn't know my mother could be that artistic.

Section 1:

#1: "The pipe screamed. Not the usual discord of an out-of-tune organ pipe, but an actual scream-high, thin, and unmistakably human."

Strengths:

- Your opening grabs attention immediately with an unusual and mysterious image that makes readers want to know more.
- The quick follow-up explanation helps readers understand exactly what kind of sound you're describing.

Spacing Problems → Your sentence needs spaces after hyphens and commas to make it easier to read. Notice how "scream-high" runs together without a space after the hyphen, and some commas throughout your piece don't have proper spacing. This makes your writing look rushed and harder to follow. Proper spacing helps readers pause at the right moments and understand your meaning better.

Exemplar: *"Not the usual discord of an out-of-tune organ pipe, but an actual scream—high, thin, and unmistakably human."*

#2: "I'd been his apprentice for three months, long enough to know that organ pipes don't scream. They whistle, they wheeze, they occasionally produce sounds like dying cattle, but they don't scream."

Strengths:

- Your listing of different sounds the pipes make helps readers understand what's normal versus what's strange.
- The repetition of "they don't scream" emphasises how unusual this situation is.

Run-on Thoughts → Your ideas are running into each other without clear breaks. When you write "I tried to assure myself it was just an accident and nothing would happen. Afterall, only this morning had I felt that nothing could stop me. But it had," these thoughts jump around confusingly. What stopped you? How does morning confidence connect to the screaming pipe? Your readers need clearer links between ideas. Also, "Afterall" should be two words: "After all."

Exemplar: *"I tried to assure myself it was just an accident. After all, only this morning I had felt confident in my new role. Now, facing this impossible sound, that confidence had vanished."*

#3: "A voice broke the silence. 'The cathedral organist disappeared in 1847.'"

Strengths:

- Your ending creates mystery by suggesting the scream might be connected to someone who vanished long ago.
- Ending with this mysterious statement makes readers curious about what will happen next.

Missing Context → Your story suddenly introduces a new voice without telling us who is speaking or why they're mentioning something from 1847. Is it Master Cornelius speaking? Someone else? Why are they bringing up this fact right now? Additionally, throughout your piece, you shift between feeling tense, then relaxed, then worried again without showing us clearly what causes these changes. Your narrator says "My tense expression relaxed" but then immediately seems worried again without explanation.

Exemplar: *"Master Cornelius finally broke the silence, his voice barely above a whisper. 'The cathedral organist disappeared in 1847.' He looked directly at the source of the scream, and I understood why he showed no surprise."*

■ Your piece creates an intriguing mystery atmosphere and shows good instincts for building suspense. The screaming pipe is a clever and unusual problem that draws readers in. However, your writing would become much stronger if you helped readers follow your narrator's emotional journey more clearly. Right now, we see the narrator tense, then relaxed, then worried, but we don't fully understand why these shifts happen. Additionally, you need to work on connecting your sentences and ideas more smoothly so readers aren't left confused about how one thought relates to the next. Think about each time you introduce a new idea—can readers understand why you're mentioning it at this moment? Also, the ending introduces an important piece of information, but readers need to know who is speaking and why this historical fact matters to the current situation. To improve, take your second and third paragraphs and rewrite them, making sure every sentence connects logically to the one before it. Show us clearly what causes your narrator's feelings to change, and make sure any new information

(like the voice at the end) includes enough detail for readers to picture the scene. Your story has strong potential; it just needs clearer paths for readers to follow your ideas.

Overall Score: 39/50

Section 2:

#1 The pipe screamed. Not the usual discord of an out-of-tune organ pipe, but an actual ~~scream-high~~ [scream—high], thin, and unmistakably human. I glanced at Master Cornelius. He didn't flinch. He simply adjusted his tuning fork. My tense expression relaxed. Bright Christmas lights hung around the cathedral ceiling. The air smelled faintly of organic flowers left too long in a vase. Cornelius made a note in his leather-bound journal, and said, "C-sharp. As I suspected."

#2 I'd been his apprentice for three months, long enough to know that organ pipes don't scream. They whistle, they ~~wheeze,they~~ [wheeze, they] occasionally produce sounds like dying ~~cattle,but~~ [cattle, but] they don't scream. I tried to assure myself it was just an accident and nothing would happen. ~~Afterall~~ [After all], only this morning had I felt that nothing could stop me. But it ~~had,I~~ [had. I] opened my mouth but Cornelius silenced me with a raised finger.

~~"Listen,"he~~ ["Listen," he] commanded.

I listened. The great cathedral organ towered over us in the cheerful light, its thousands of pipes ranging from pencil-thin whistles to massive bronze columns thick as tree trunks.

The scream was back. Definitely C-sharp. Definitely human. Definitely coming from somewhere deep within the organ's wooden case.

#3 A voice broke the silence.

"The cathedral organist disappeared in 1847."