

Section 1:

#1: "The bustling playground was empty at dusk. Everyone was gone. Not one person. I gazed lifelessly at the playground, dumbfounded. I hopped over the fence. It was locked."

Strengths: Your piece establishes an unsettling atmosphere through contrasting imagery—the "bustling playground" contradicts "empty," which immediately signals something's amiss. The short, punchy sentences ("Everyone was gone. Not one person.") create tension and mirror your character's disorientation effectively.

→ **Contradictory sequence** Your opening creates a logical puzzle. You describe hopping over the fence, but then reveal "It was locked"—yet if you've already hopped over it, how can it simultaneously be locked? This confuses your reader about what's actually happened.

"I approached the fence. It was locked. I hopped over it anyway, my shoes scraping against the cold metal."

#2: "I navigated around the abandoned park, which expanded with every step I took. Was it this big? Or is this just an illusion? Cardboard signs hung in every corner of the park, each one pointing in random directions. No, they were not random. It wants me to do something."

Strengths: Your piece transitions skillfully from realism into dreamlike uncertainty—the park "expanding with every step" suggests a surreal, shifting space. The character's realisation that the signs aren't random builds mystery and draws your reader deeper into the strangeness.

→ **Unclear motivation shift** Your character suddenly recognises that "It wants me to do something," but there's no clear reasoning shown. What specific detail makes them reach this conclusion? The jump feels abrupt without scaffolding your reader through the character's thought process.

"The signs all pointed towards the middle. It wants me to do something, I realised. The deliberate direction couldn't be coincidence."

#3: "I tugged at the fence, but it was still locked. Just why? Normally, you can open it from the inside. But this wasn't normal – it was a disaster. I tried to leap over the fence, but the bars were higher. Way higher."

Strengths: Your piece conveys panic through escalating attempts and the repetition of "higher. Way higher."—this mimics breathless desperation convincingly. The metalanguage ("But this wasn't normal – it was a disaster") signals your character's dawning realisation.

→ **Vague emotional language** Calling the situation "a disaster" tells your reader how to feel rather than showing through concrete details. What specific sensations accompany your character's panic? How does their body respond?

"My palms slicked with sweat as I gripped the bars. They were higher than before—impossibly higher."

■ Your writing ventures into imaginative territory, blending realistic detail with dreamlike uncertainty, which is genuinely engaging. However, your writing would strengthen considerably if you clarified the logical sequence of events—particularly the fence situation—so your reader can follow your character's journey without confusion. Additionally, try deepening emotional moments by showing physical sensations and specific details rather than naming feelings directly. Your final paragraph feels rushed; give yourself space to explore what the ruined park means and why your character feels "abandoned" there. Slow down in key moments, especially the ending, and let your reader experience the dread alongside your character rather than racing through it.

Overall Score: 42/50

Section 2:

The bustling playground was empty at dusk. Everyone was gone. Not one person. I gazed lifelessly at the playground, dumbfounded. ~~I hopped over the fence. It was locked.~~ [I approached the fence—it was locked. I hopped over it anyway.] The silent creaking of swings seemed to echo across the vast area as it rocked relentlessly, although no-one was on it. My fingers traced the familiar, cool surface of the slide as I loitered around the hollow plaza. I slumped on a wooden bench. My warm hands quivered in unease. I knew this place so well, yet I felt as if I wasn't supposed to be here.

I navigated around the abandoned park, which expanded with every step I took. Was it this big? Or is this just an illusion? Cardboard signs hung in every corner of the park, each one pointing in random directions. No, they were not random. It wants me to do something. ~~I looked again. The signs all pointed towards the middle.~~ [The signs converged towards the centre.] My legs automatically pulled themselves towards the centre of the playground. I gasped in delightful dread. An endless tunnel stood in the middle of nowhere, its rainbow colours illuminating the darkness.

No, this is weird. Wrong. Alluring. Yet comforting.

But I could not do it. I had to go home. Or I might be lost in the abyss for the night. I must go home. Go home.

Suddenly, the tunnel started growing larger, like a black hole, consuming everything in ~~it grasp~~ [its grasp].

Run. Don't look back. Just run. Must escape. No other option. Go. ~~Breathe~~ [Breathe].

I tugged at the fence, but it was still locked. ~~Just why?~~ [Why?] Normally, you can open it from the inside. But this wasn't normal – it was a disaster. I tried to leap over the fence, but the bars were higher. Way higher. I screamed for help. I waved my hands. I bashed the fence. But I was unheard.

I was flushed down the slide, my trembling legs scraping against the rough surface of the tunnel. ~~I looked back up tunnel.~~ [I looked back up the tunnel.] There is no way I can be rescued now. I shut my eyes, prepared for my doom...

I crashed onto a soft mattress, barely conscious. A blur of familiar faces filled my vision. It was my friends, but tears were welling in their eyes and frowns were plastered on every face. I looked at my town. It was... a ruin. I tried to escape, but I was imprisoned inside another park, not the kind I like. All equipment was broken, and all structures were deteriorated. I was stuck... abandoned... neglected... thrown into a park... more like a prison... but just worse...