

Section 1

#1 "The wind rocked the swings, coaxing a sigh from them as gentle as a forgotten dream. Silent and still, the slide waited patiently, its once-polished surface dimmed by time, while its silence remained heavy with the ghost of laughter that had long since faded."

Strengths: Your piece establishes a haunting atmosphere through personification—the swings "sigh" and the slide "waits patiently"—which effectively conveys a sense of abandonment and loss. The sensory detail of "dimmed by time" works well to show rather than tell the playground's deterioration.

→ **Unclear spatial relationships** Your opening description doesn't establish where Anna is in relation to these objects, which makes the scene feel slightly disorienting. We understand the playground is abandoned, but the connection between the setting's mood and Anna's presence needs clearer grounding.

Your piece could open with: "Anna stepped into the abandoned playground, where the wind rocked the swings as gently as a forgotten dream. The slide stood silent and still, its once-polished surface dimmed by time..."

#2 "A single leaf dropped from a tree, brushing past the groaning climbing frame, casting a shadow of dances on the floor. As Anna lay her fingertips on the metal bars, it gasped for a split second, then stopped, as if it was afraid yet surprised to see her."

Strengths: Your piece uses vivid verbs like "gasped" and "groaning" that bring objects to life. The phrase "shadow of dances" is particularly creative and suggests movement and memory within stillness.

→ **Logical connection between actions** The transition from the falling leaf to Anna touching the climbing frame feels rushed. We don't understand why Anna moves to touch it or how the leaf's movement prompts her action, which makes the moment feel disconnected.

You might revise to: "As Anna watched the leaf drift down, she felt drawn to the climbing frame. When she lay her fingertips on the metal bars, it gasped for a split second..."

#3 "She perched herself on the giant swing, and memories of her younger brother's voice flashed back, echoing in her ears like a lullaby. She could almost see him standing in front of her right now, his smile bright, urging her to come to the see-saw with him. But the seat of the see-saw remained empty. Still. Lifeless. Miserable."

Strengths: Your piece uses contrast powerfully here—the vivid memory of her brother against the empty see-saw seat emphasises loss and absence. The final three single-word sentences create impact and slow the reader's pace.

→ **Unbalanced emotional weight** The final three words—"Still. Lifeless. Miserable."—feel disconnected from what came before. We know why the see-saw is empty (her brother is gone), but these words focus on the object rather than Anna's emotional response to the memory itself.

Consider revising to: "But the seat of the see-saw remained empty, waiting for a brother who would never return. The realisation felt still, suffocating, unbearable."

Your piece demonstrates strong atmospheric writing and genuine emotional depth. The imagery of the abandoned playground works well to reflect Anna's grief about her brother. However, some moments in your writing need clearer connections between actions and feelings—you jump between ideas without always showing us why things matter to Anna. Additionally, your piece would benefit from tightening certain descriptions so they focus more directly on what Anna observes and feels, rather than adding layers of description that sometimes pull away from her experience. Try reading your piece aloud and asking yourself: "Does the reader understand why Anna does this here?" and "What does Anna feel in this moment?" This will help you strengthen the link between setting, action, and emotion.

Score: 41/50

Section 2

The wind rocked the swings, coaxing a sigh from them as gentle as a forgotten dream. Silent and still, the slide waited patiently, its once-polished surface dimmed by time, while its silence remained heavy with the ghost of laughter that had long since faded. The see-saw gleamed faintly in the pale light, its silver skin ~~word~~ [worn] dull by seasons of rain and the silence where joy was once alive. Anna walked on the ~~peeled~~ [peeling] pathway, previously painted with all the colours of the rainbow. Time had taken its shine, and now the pathway lay grey and dull, its surface etched with the traces of forgotten afternoons.

A single leaf dropped from a tree, brushing past the groaning climbing frame, casting a shadow of dances on the floor. As Anna lay her fingertips on the metal bars, it gasped for a split second, then stopped, as if it was afraid yet surprised to see her. She perched herself on the giant swing, and memories of her younger brother's voice flashed back, echoing in her ears like a lullaby. She could almost see him standing in front of her right now, his smile bright, urging her to come to the see-saw with him. But the seat of the see-saw remained empty. Still. Lifeless. Miserable.

Maybe all these memories were too much for her. She gazed up at the sky, studying the vibrant colours. Hues of soft gold, flamingo pink, ocean blue and pastel orange smudged the sky, with streaks of lavender purple appearing every now and then, painting the atmosphere with a warm glow as the sun melted into the horizon. She turned to leave, whispering goodbye to the sky and the forgotten equipment. The breeze gave the swing a final gentle push, with her brother's laugh echoing silently behind her. Then, the playground fell silent like her visit had never happened, but waited for the next visitor to come.