Five Senses Detail Builder

Transform flat "and then" writing into vivid scenes using sensory details.













Plus: Characterisation Tools

Why do the **5 Senses Matter?**



Good writing lets readers see, smell, taste, hear, and feel the world you create.

Shows Feelings

Sensory details help show how characters are feeling without just telling the reader.

Slows Down Time

Adding details slows down the most important moments to make them more exciting.

MINI EXAMPLE

INSTEAD OF JUST SAYING "WE WERE AT THE BEACH":

"Golden light blinked on the waves as gulls screeched overhead."

O SIGHT DETAIL

அ SOUND DETAIL

Pro Tip:

You don't need all 5 senses in every sentence! Just one or two strong details can transform your writing.



FLAT

 \rightarrow

"We went to the beach and then we swam and then we ate ice cream and then we went home."

NO DETAIL

JUST A LIST

Why it's weak:

- **X Lists events** without any images or feelings.
- × Reads like a **boring to-do list** instead of a story.
- × Uses the same repetitive rhythm ("and then").



BETTER

"We reached the beach. Waves flashed white in the sun. After that, we swam through cool, salty water."

VISUALS

FEELINGS

BETTER TRANSITIONS

Why it works:

- ✓ Specific details create a movie in the reader's mind.
- ✓ Uses senses (sight, touch, taste) to create immersion.
- ✓ Breaks the boring "and then" pattern.



The 3-Paragraph Plan

Plan 3 key moments instead of a long list

1 Start (Setting the Scene)

Who is there? Where are they? What time is it? Set the mood immediately.

2 Middle (The Action/Problem)

Something happens. Zoom in and slow down this moment. Don't rush!

3 End (Resolution & Feeling)

How does it end? How does the character feel now? Wrap it up.

Tip: Each moment becomes one full paragraph.



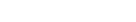
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The Golden Rule

The secret ingredient for vivid writing

THE RULE:

Include at least **ONE sensory detail** in every single paragraph.









Pick from the menu:





ght Sme

Smell

Sound T

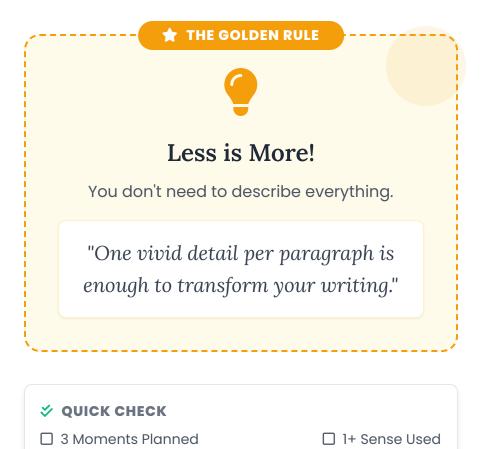
66 Asking "Can I see, hear, or feel this?" is the quickest way to fix boring writing.

Your 5-Step Writing Routine

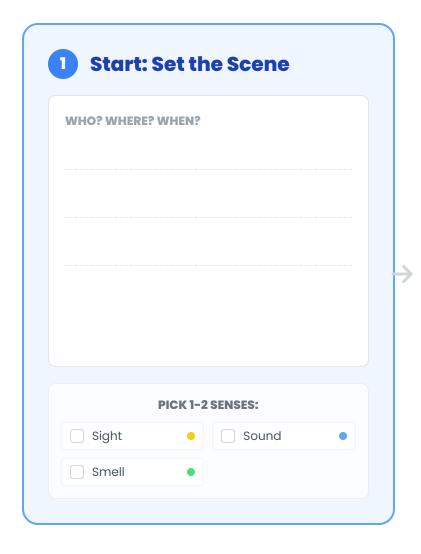
- Plan 3 Key Moments
 Start, Middle, End. Don't list everything!
- Pick Your Senses
 Choose 1–2 senses for each paragraph (e.g., Sight + Sound).
- Grab Strong Words
 Use the word banks to find better words than "nice" or "bad".
- Use Sentence Starters

 Avoid "and then" by using the Transition Words list.
- Draft & Check

 Write your paragraphs, then check off the senses you used.



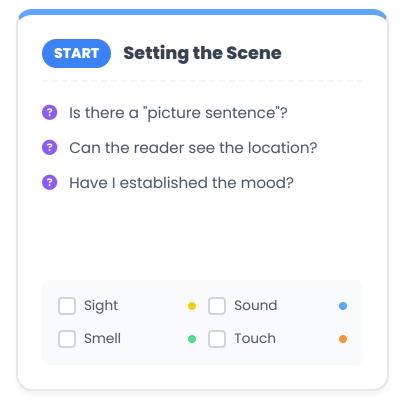
3-Moment Story Planner

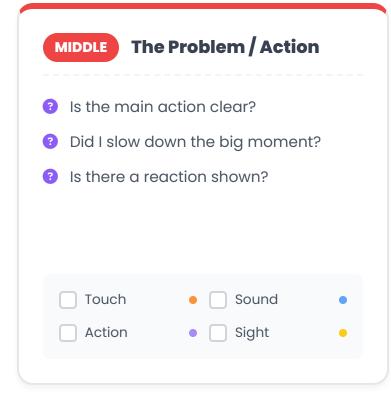


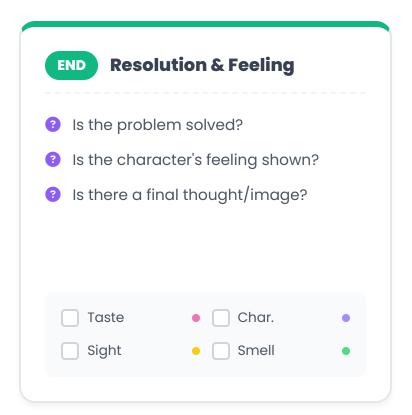
WHAT HAPPENS	S? (ACTION)	
S	LOW DOWN	I WITH:	

HOW DOES IT END	o? FEELING?
LEAV	/E A FEELING WITH:
LEAV Character	

Scene Planning Guide & Checklist









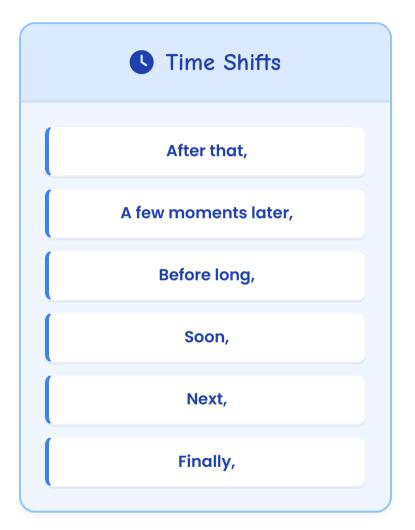
Master Tip: Slow Down Time

Don't rush the most important 5-10 seconds of your story! Use extra sensory details to make that moment last longer in the reader's mind.

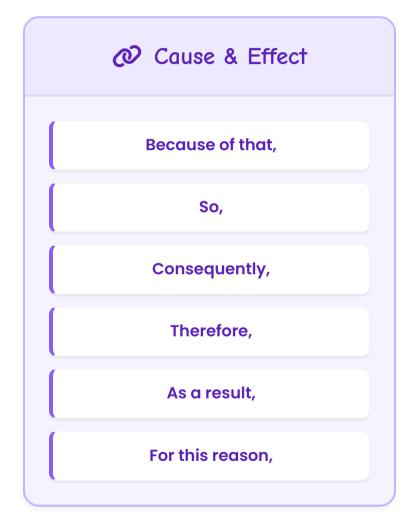
Replace "And Then"

and then...

Use these transition words to glue your story together smoothly.



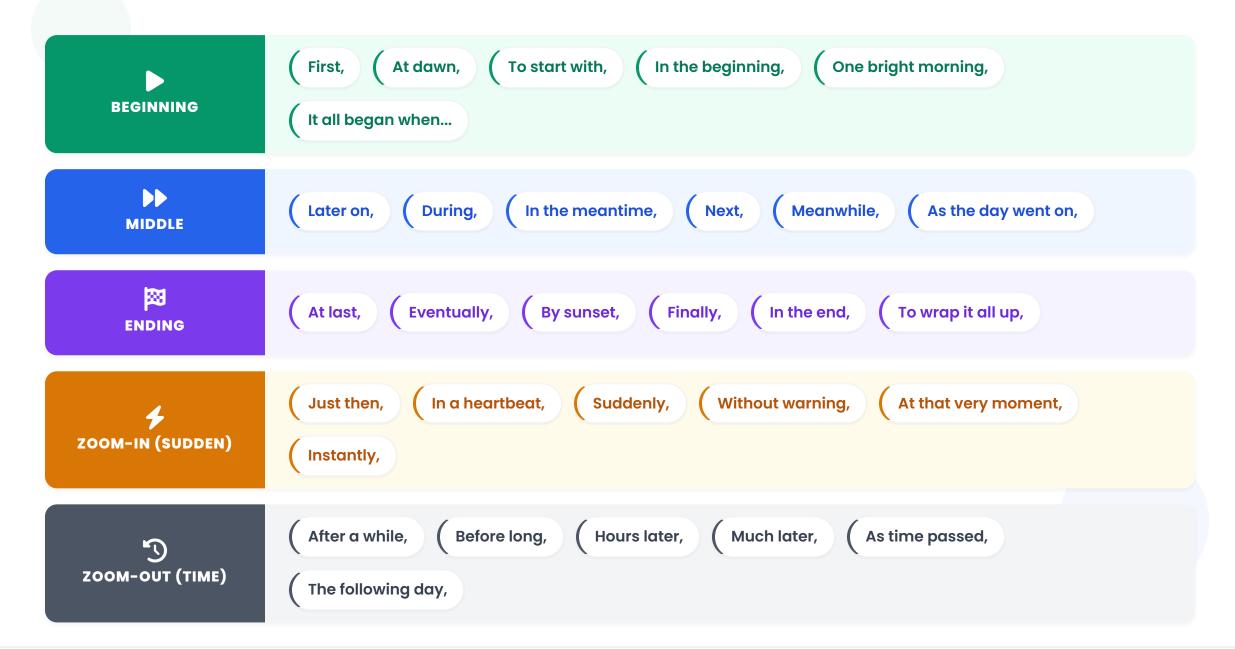


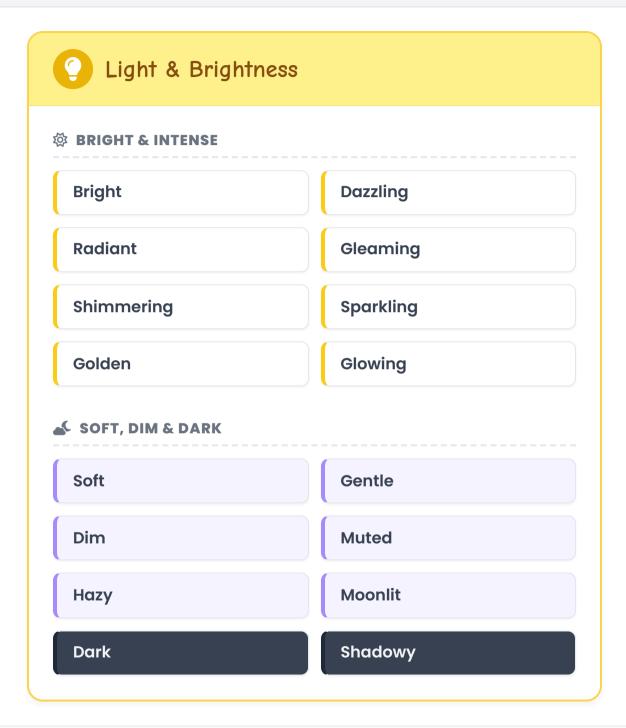


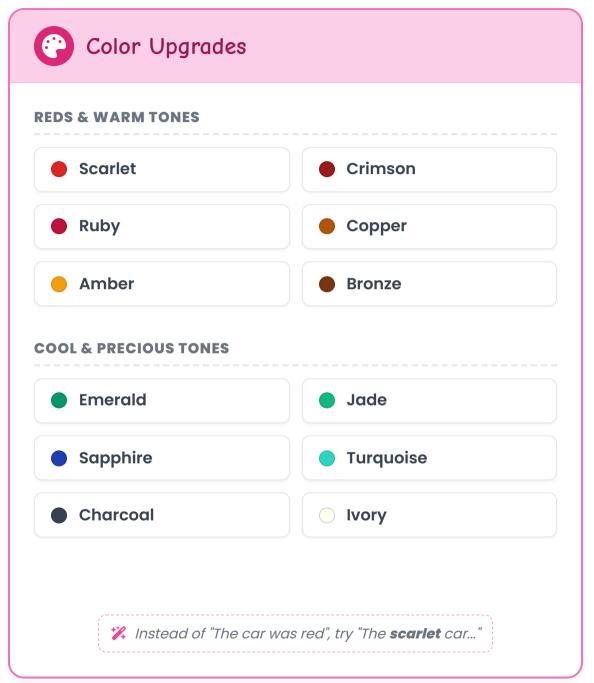
RHYTHM CHECK

Sometimes the best replacement is just a **full stop**. "We walked. We stopped. Silence." (Short sentences create tension!)

Time Connectives Word Bank



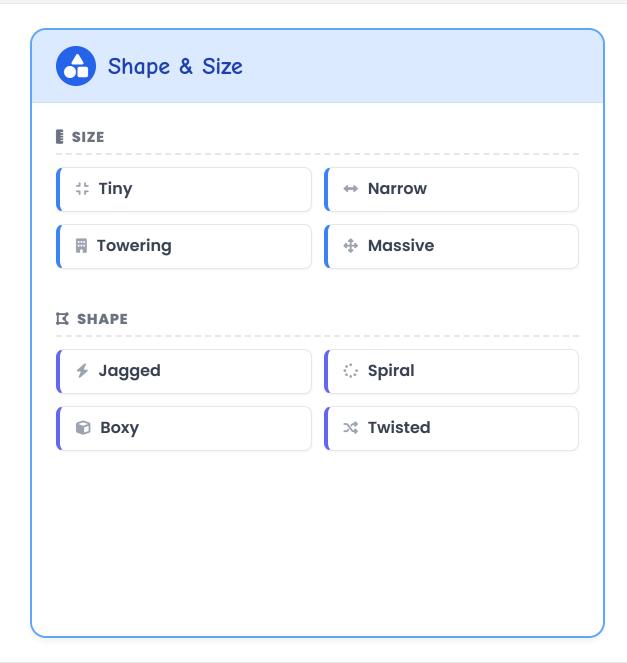


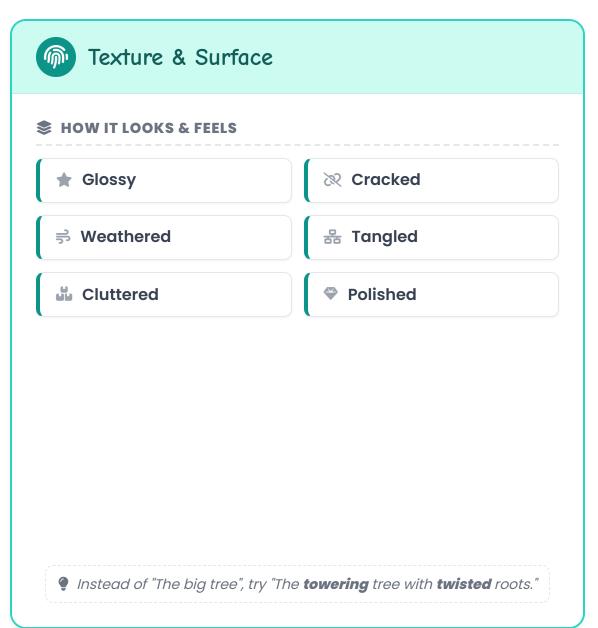


SIGHT: Looking Verbs & Starters



O SIGHT Word Bank

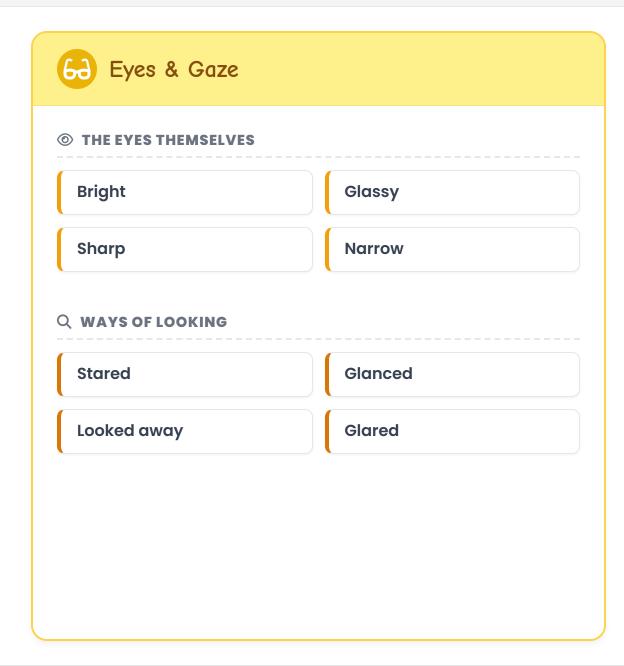


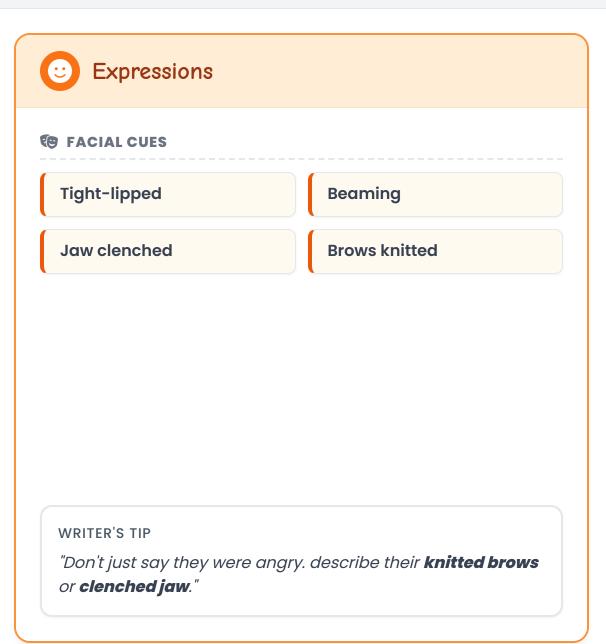


SIGHT Word Bank



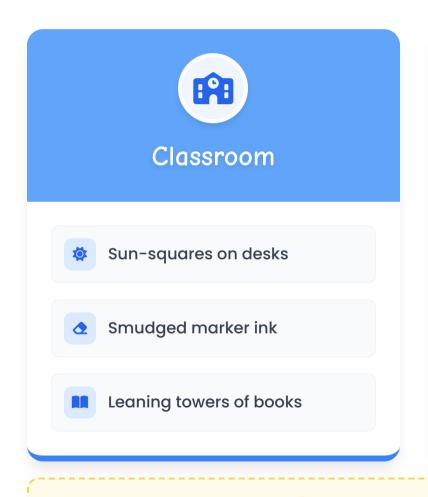
EMPTY OR FEW	
Empty	Scattered
CROWDED & FULL	
Packed	Clustered
Crowded	Teeming

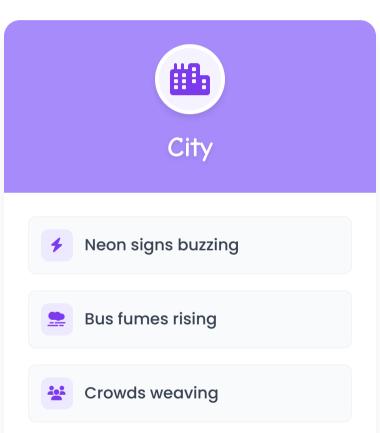


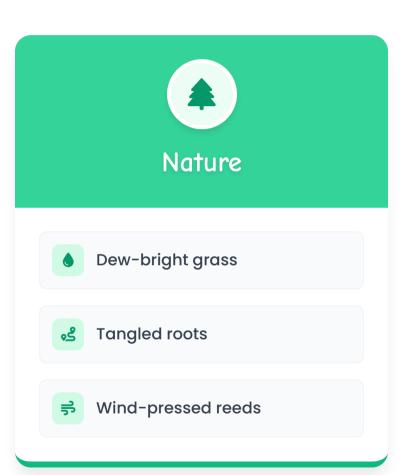


SIGHT Setting Snapshots

Stuck? Grab a "cheat code" below to instantly set the scene.



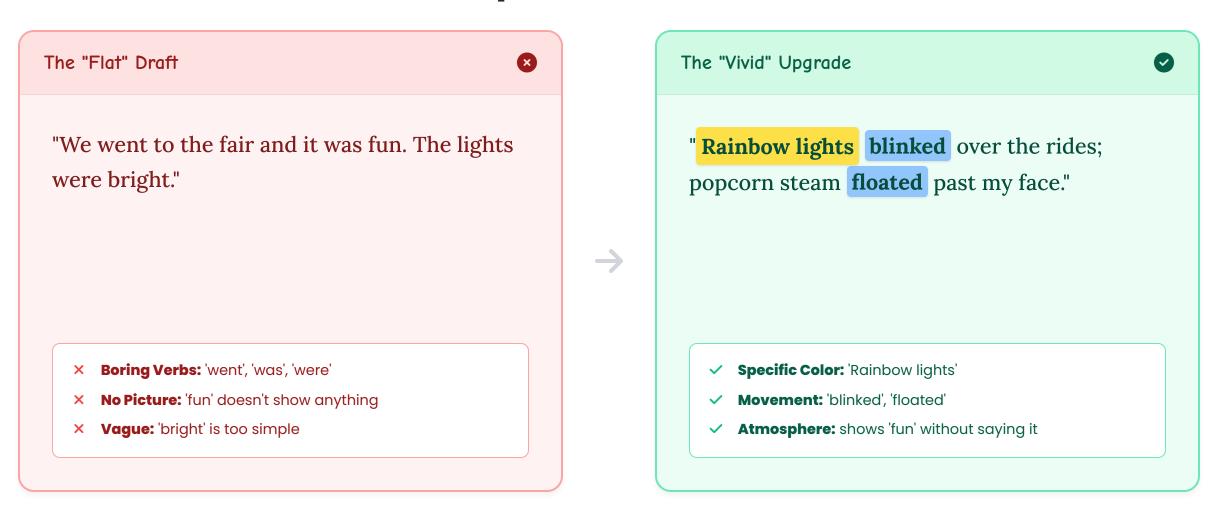




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Pro Tip: Don't list everything! Just pick <u>one</u> distinct detail to paint the picture.

Example: Before vs. After

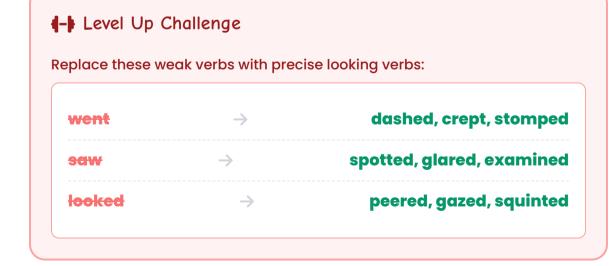


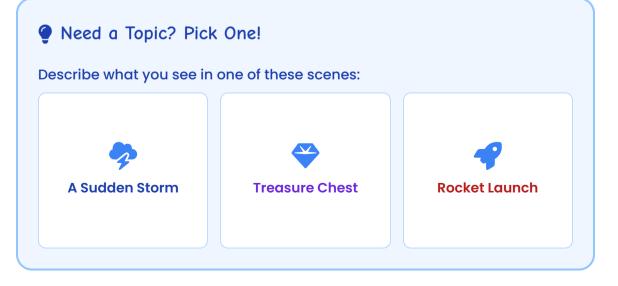
Micro-Tip: You don't need a whole page of description! Just choose <u>one strong picture</u> per paragraph to make it real.

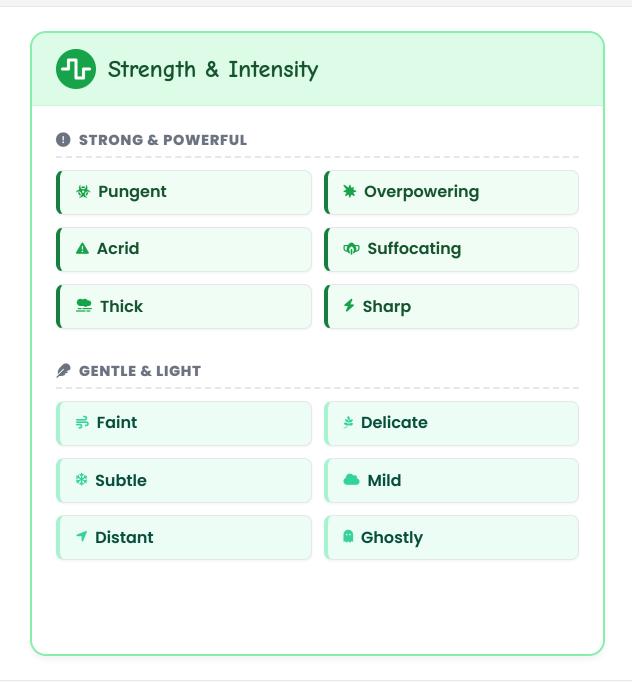


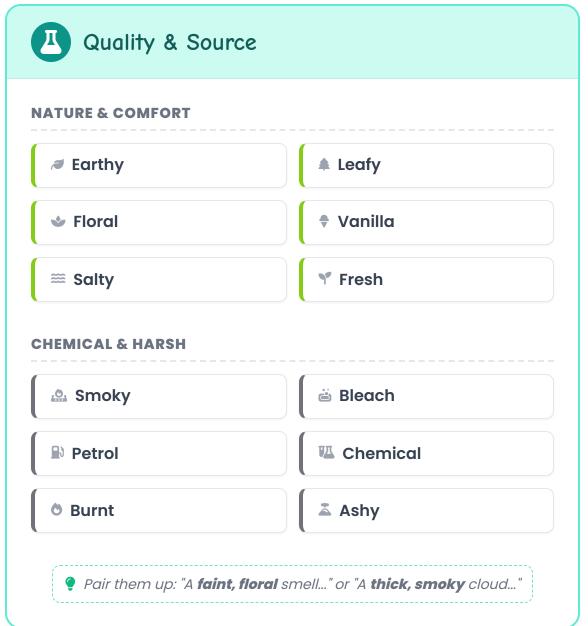
Time to Write!





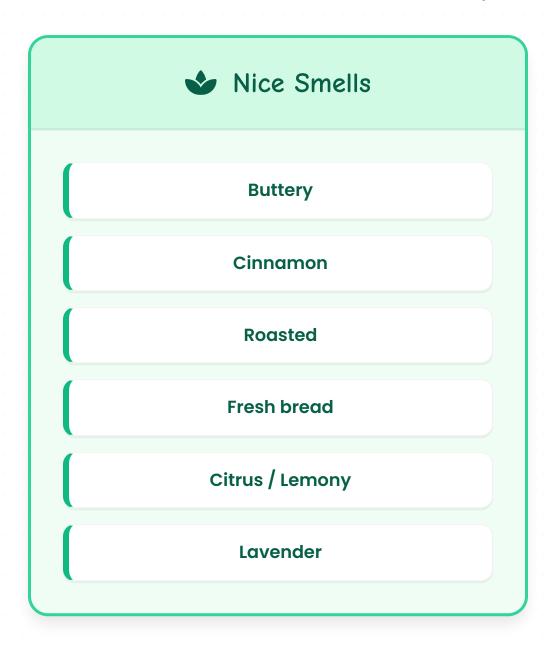


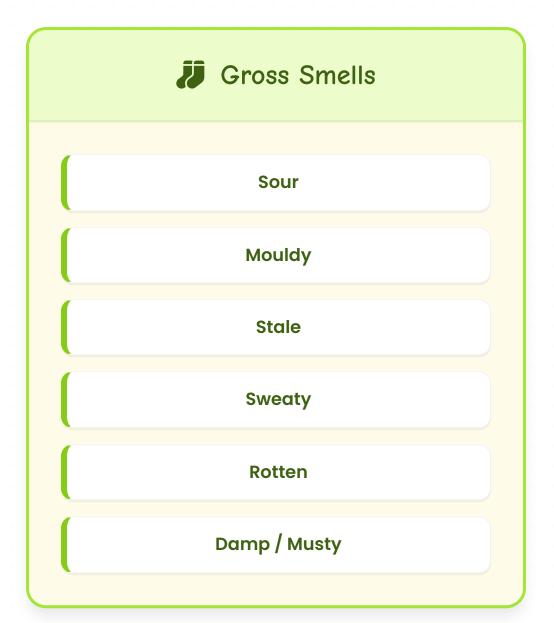




Nice vs. Gross Smells

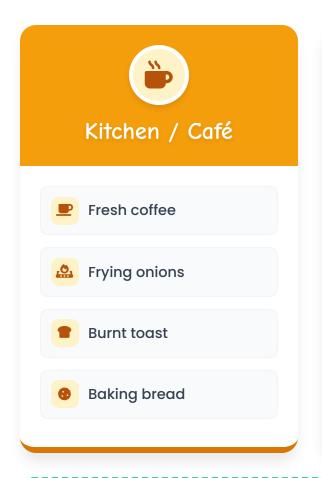
Choose a scent that instantly tells the reader if the place is safe or scary.



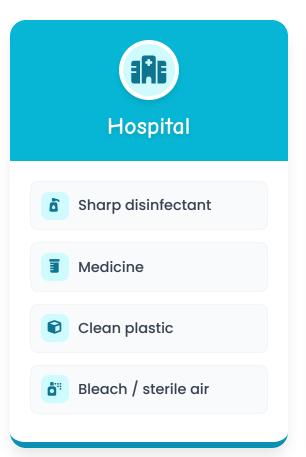


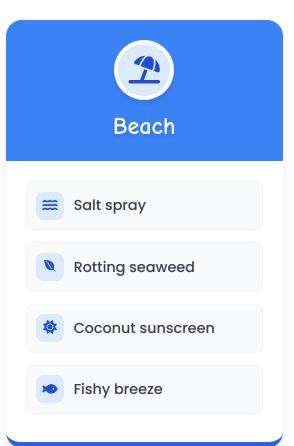
SMELL Location Cheat Codes

Add instant atmosphere with these location-specific scents.





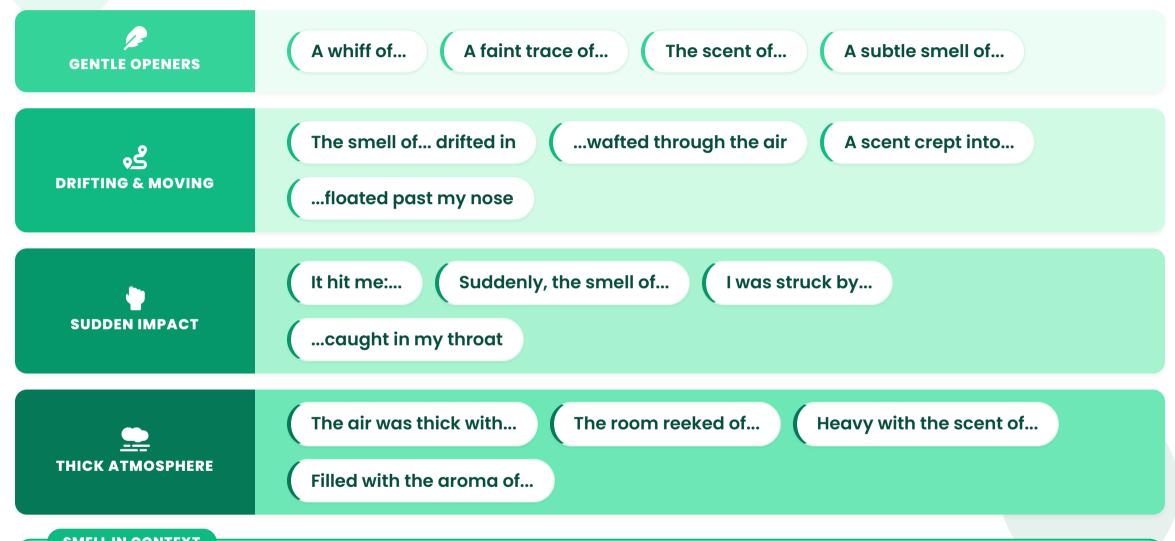




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Pro Tip: Smell is the strongest memory trigger! Use it to make your reader feel like they are really there.

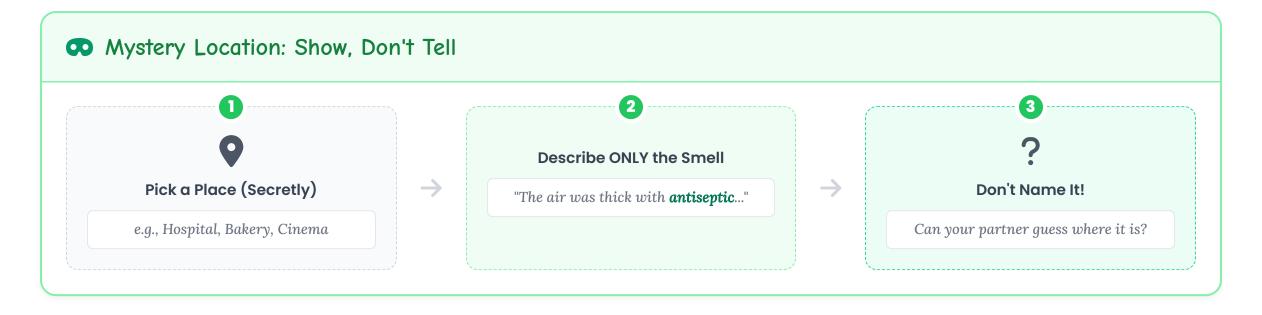
SMELL Sentence Starters



SMELL IN CONTEXT

"The corridor reeked of harsh disinfectant. A faint smell of coffee drifted from the staff room, making my empty stomach growl."

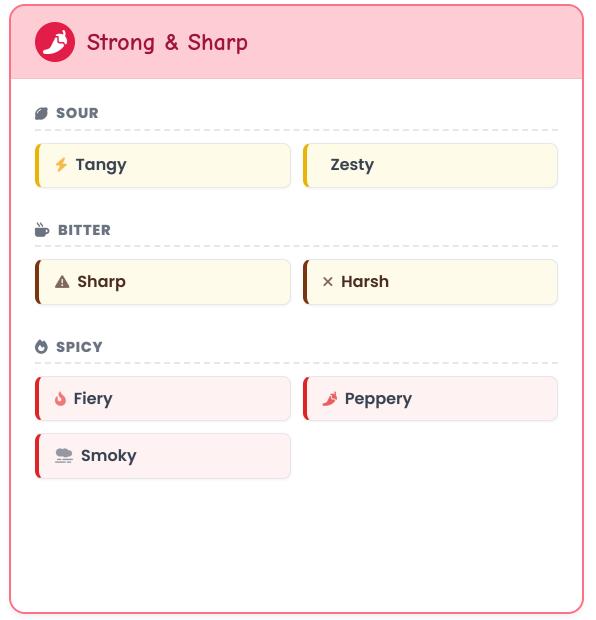
The "Invisible" Setting Challenge

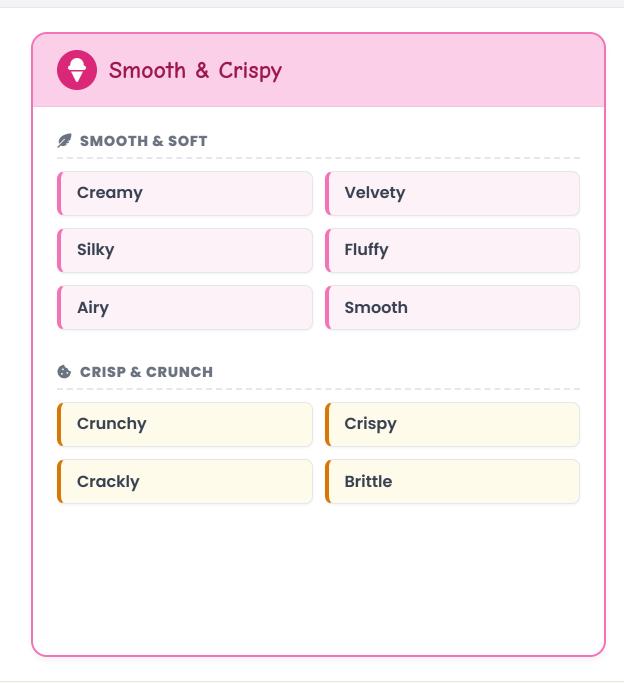








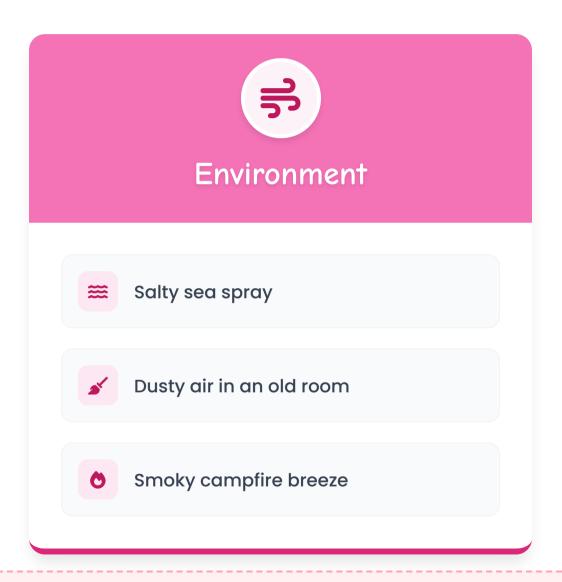


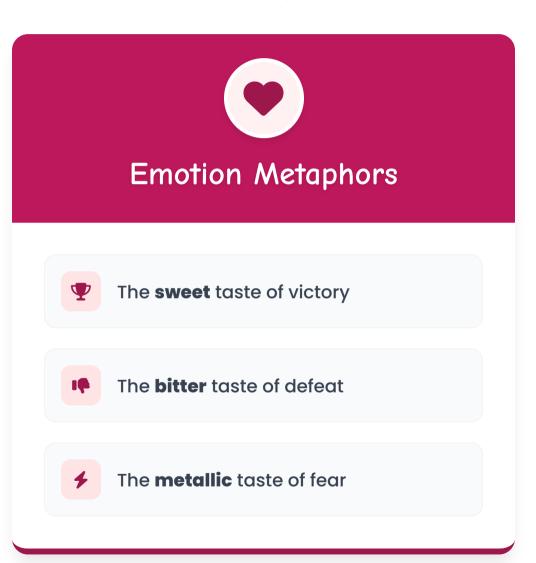


Chewy & Unpleasant			
chewy & Tough			
Chewy	Rubbery		
Tough	Sticky		
Gooey	Stringy		
UNPLEASANT FEEL			
Gritty	Sandy		
Metallic	Greasy		
Slimy	Chalky		
Instead of "It tasted good", try "The creamy chocolate"			

TASTE Settings & Emotions

Taste isn't just for food! Use it to describe the air or a character's feelings.





Pro Tip: Using taste for non-food things (like emotions) is a powerful writer's trick called a metaphor.

Taste Sentence Starters & Metaphors



Delicious Details!







Sound: Volume & Timing

Mix loud and quiet sounds to create rhythm in your story.



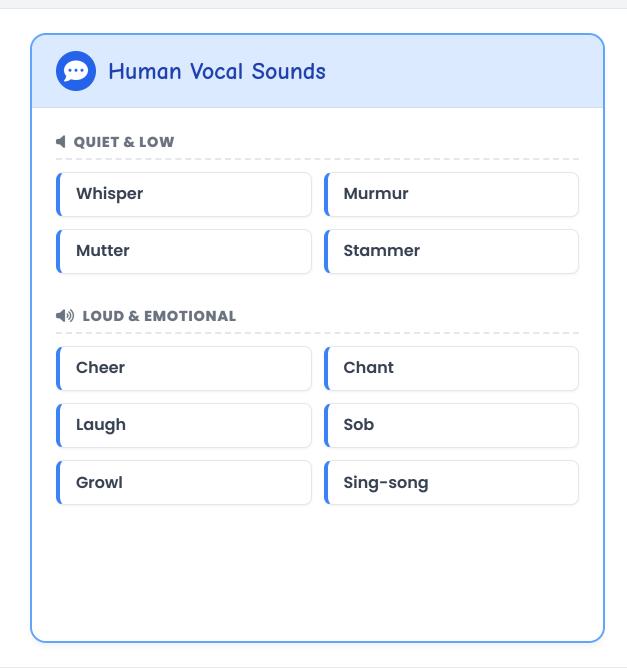


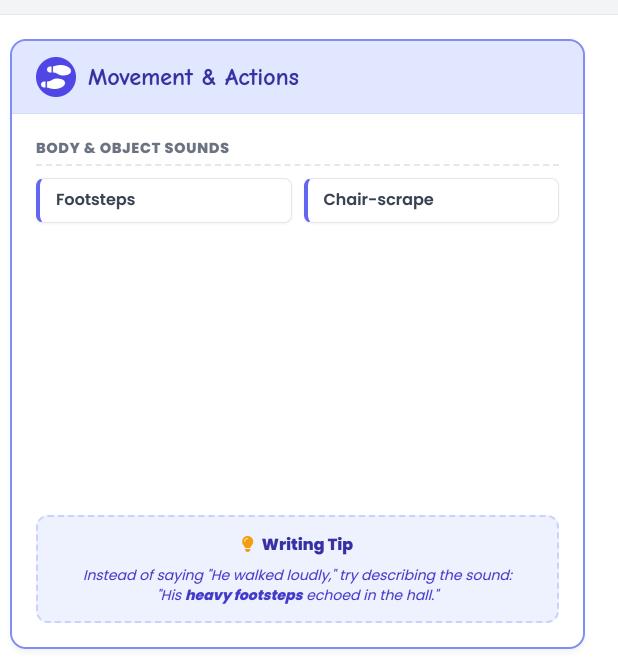




PRO TIP

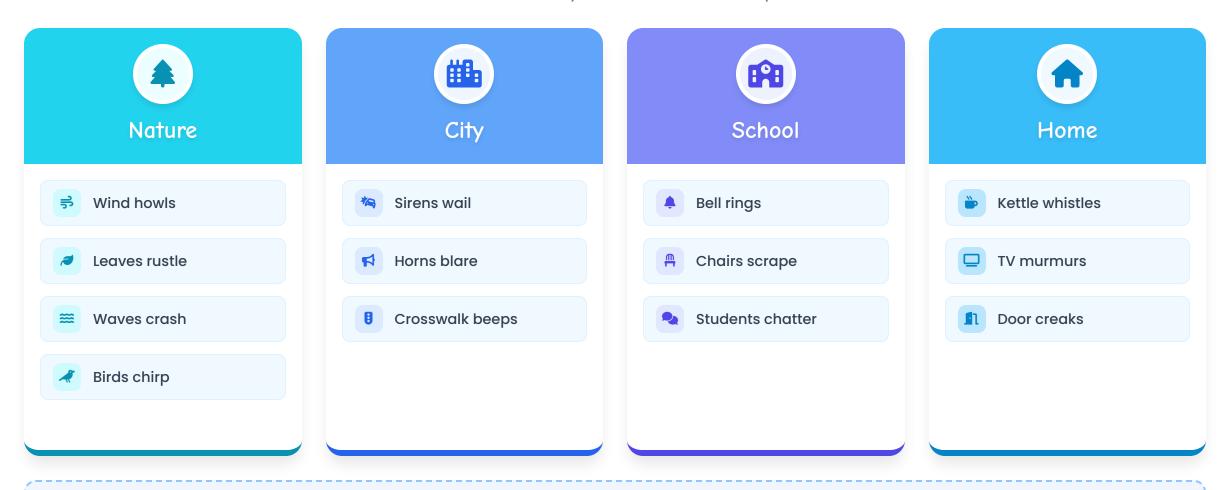
Use a **Sudden** sound to interrupt a **Quiet** moment for maximum shock! "The room was hushed... until the door slammed."





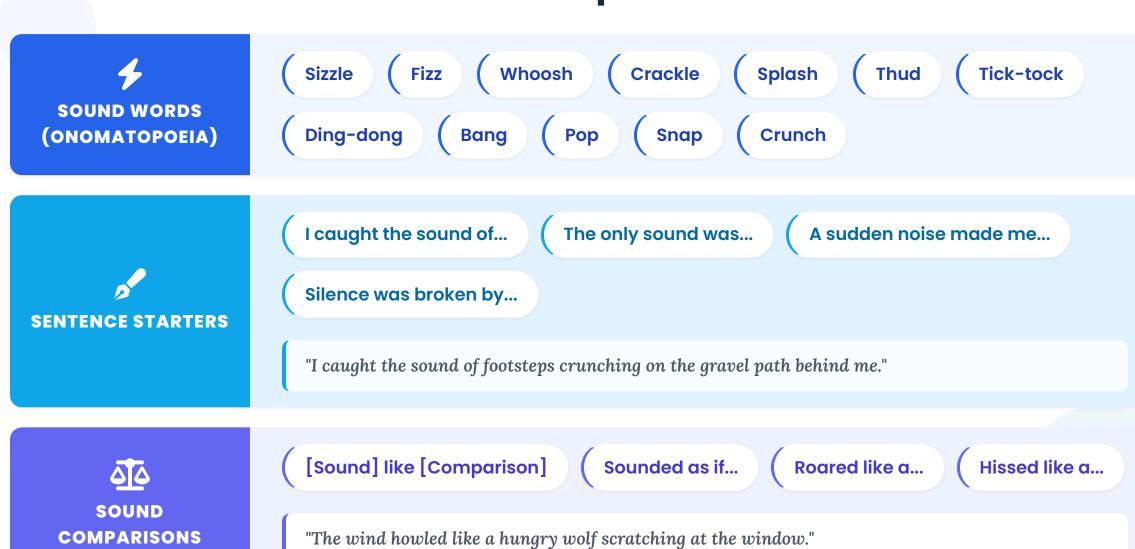
SOUND Location Cheat Codes

Stuck? Listen closely to the noise in these places.

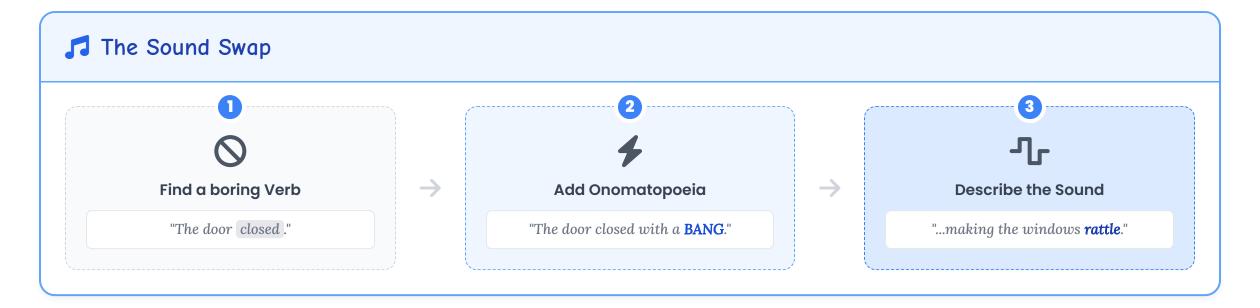


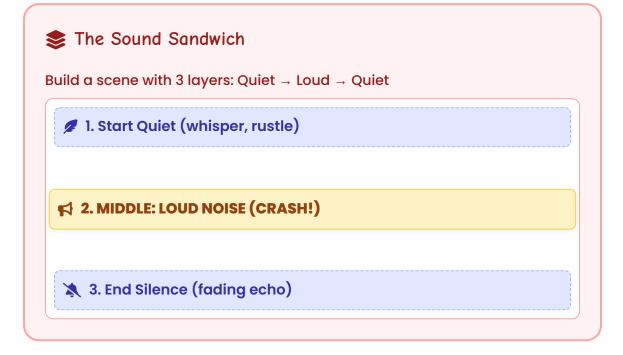
Pro Tip: Sounds change volume! Use words like <u>faint</u>, <u>distant</u>, or <u>deafening</u>.

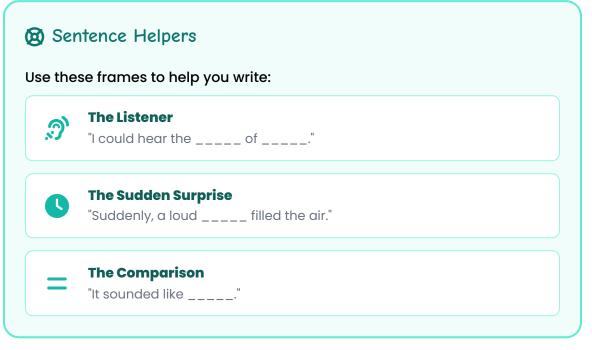
SOUND: Onomatopoeia & Starters

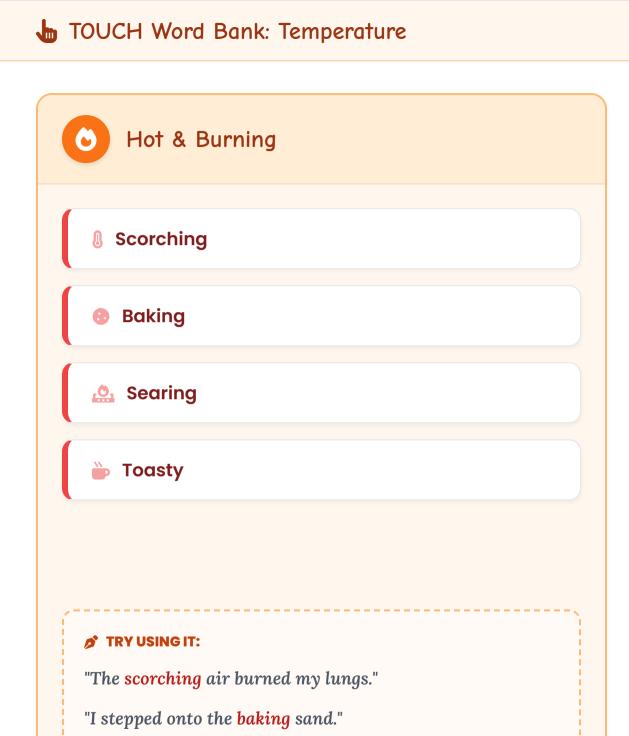


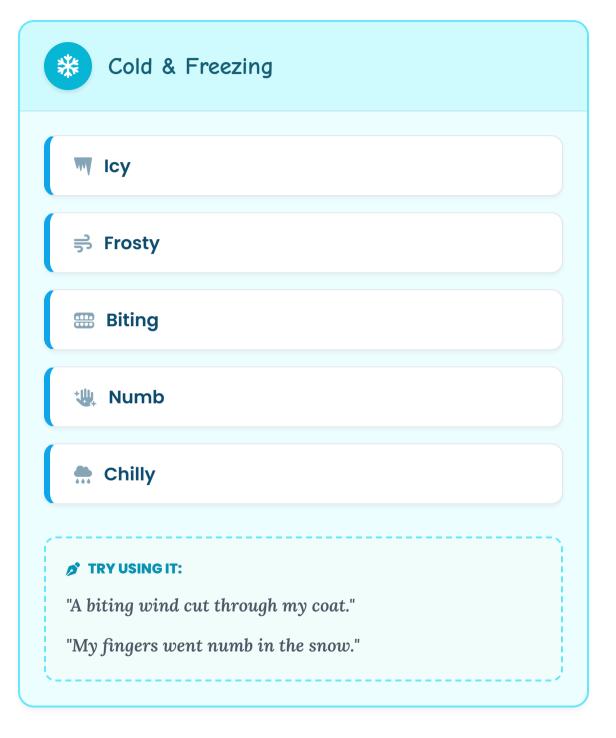
Listen & Write!





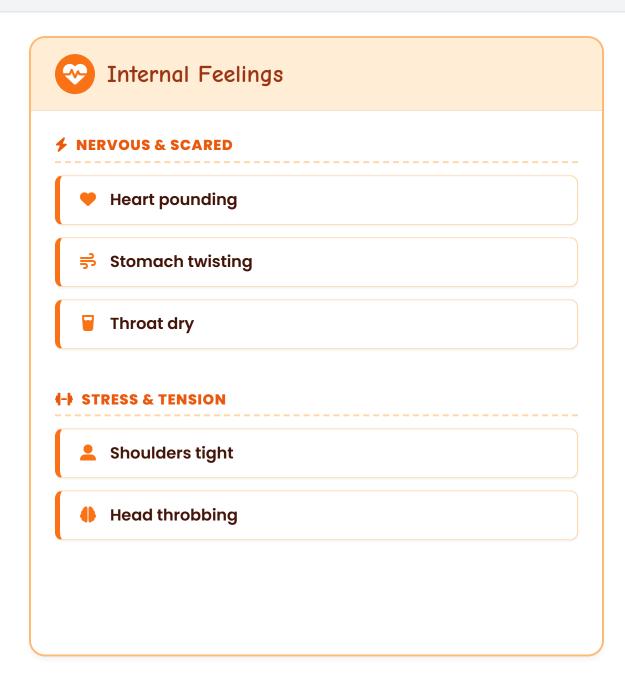


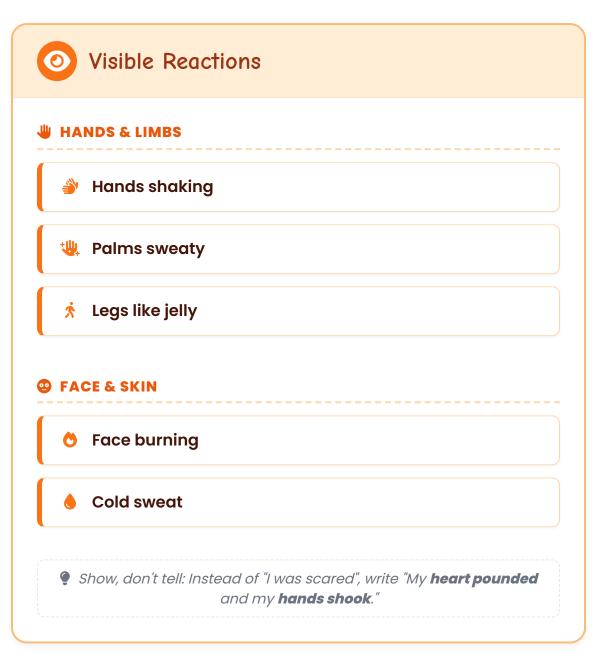


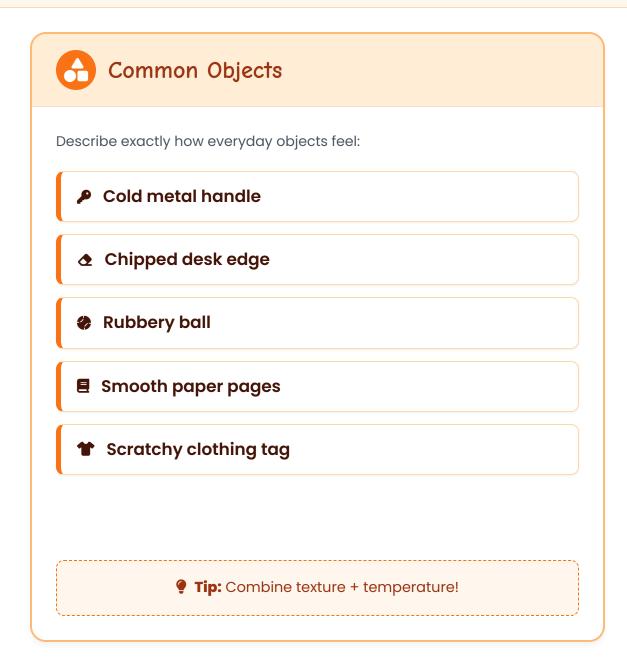


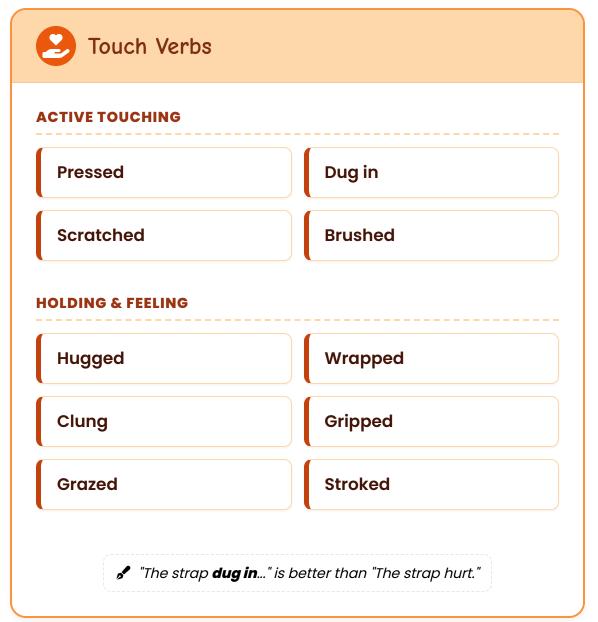




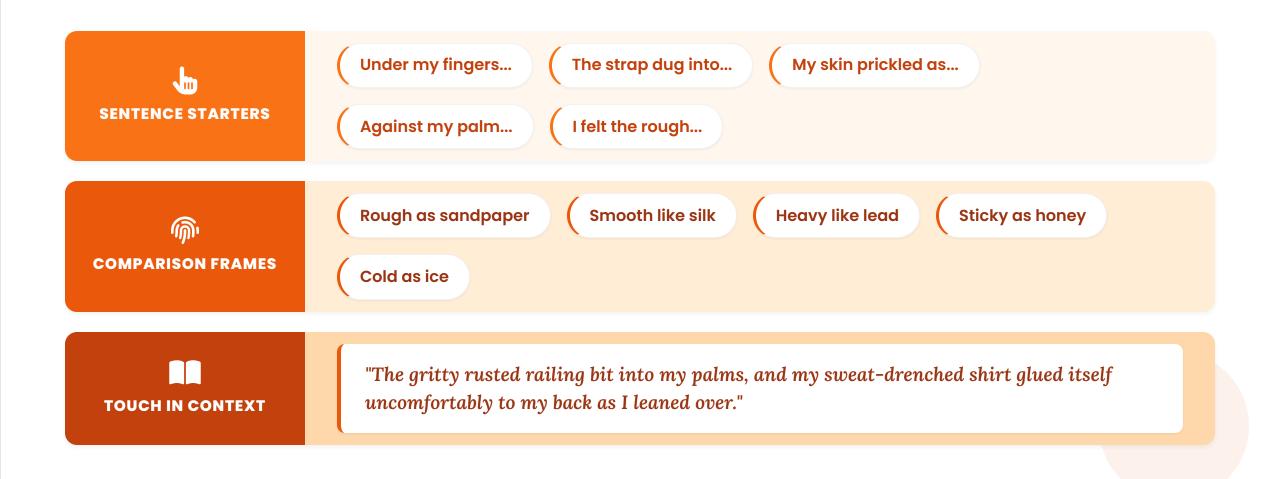








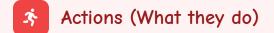
TOUCH Starters & Examples





Show, Don't Tell: The 4 Methods

Don't just say "He was nervous." Show it using these four tools.



Verbs: stomped, hid, shared, pushed, waited, tapped, grabbed, hesitated

"She slammed her book shut and crossed her arms."

Dialogue (What they say)

How: whispered, stammered, shouted, snapped, mumbled, groaned

"I-I don't know," he **stammered**, looking down.



Clues: fists clenched, face red, shaking, smiling, slumped, eyes wide, sweating

Her face burned red and she bit her lip.

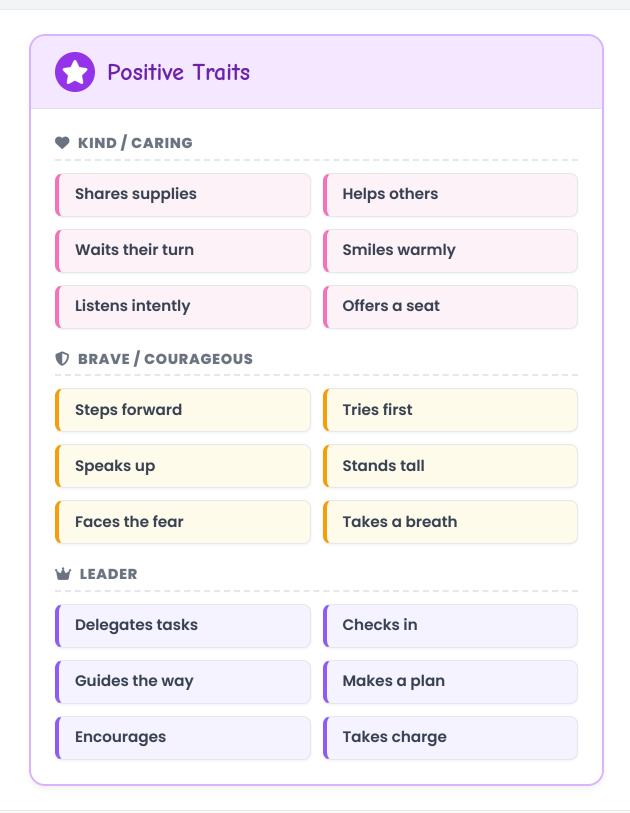
Thoughts (Inside head)

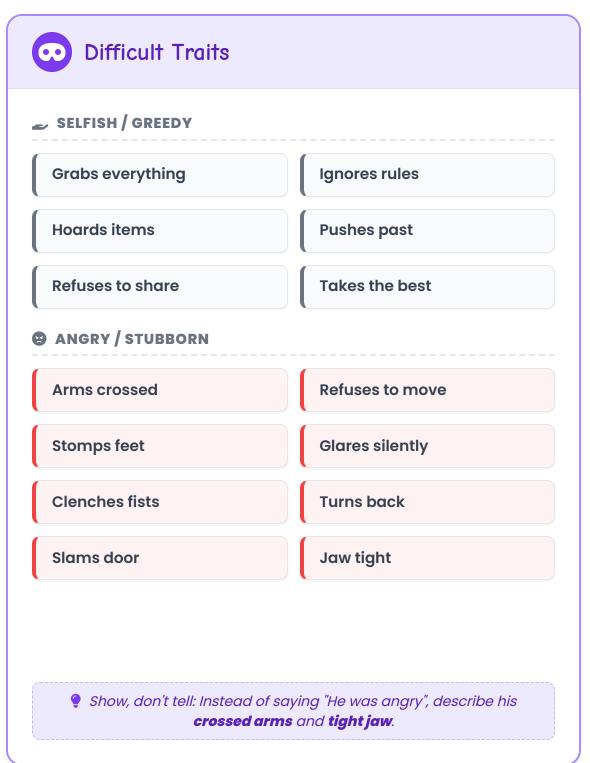
Starters: She wished..., He wondered..., Italics for direct thoughts

Please don't pick me, she thought desperately.

★ Putting it all together (Trait: Nervous / Helpful)

"Mia's pencil tapped rapidly against her desk ACTION. When Ji-ho dropped his calculator, she bent down to help him ACTION. 'D-do you need an eraser?' she whispered DIALOGUE, her eyes fixed on the floor BODY. Please don't let me fail again, she thought THOUGHT."





Dialogue Tricks for Character

What characters say (and how they say it) tells us who they are.







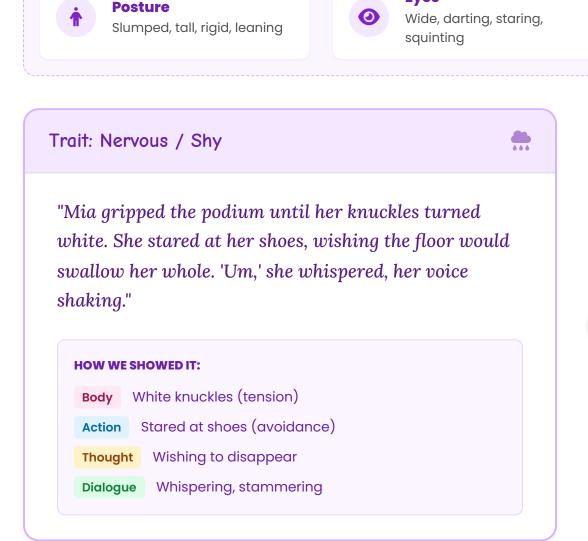


whimpered

TAG UPGRADES Don't just use "said": whispered snapped muttered sighed exclaimed



Showing Traits: Body Language & Action



Eyes



"Leo strode to the front, chin held high. He scanned the room, meeting everyone's eyes with a grin. 'Good morning,' he announced, his voice filling the hall."



Common Mistakes & How to Fix Them

Spotted a problem in your draft? Here is the quick fix.

 \rightarrow



Using every single sense in one sentence (The "Kitchen Sink" problem).



Using boring words like "nice", "bad", "big", or "scary".

■ Endless "And Then"

Listing events like a robot: "And then... and then... and then..."

▼ Telling Traits

Telling the reader: "He was sad." or "She was angry."



Choose 1-2 Best

Pick the strongest details. Less is more.

"Just the smell of rain and the sound of thunder."



Use Word Banks

Swap them for precise words from the list.

"Nice" → "Delightful" or "Cozy"



Use Transitions

Use time or action words to move the story.

"Suddenly...", "Moments later...", "Meanwhile..."

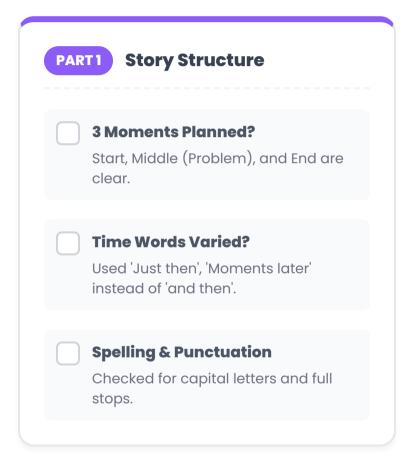


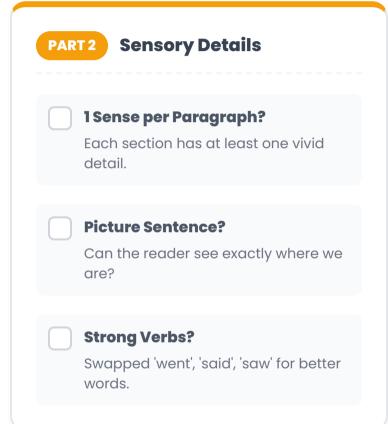
Show the Action

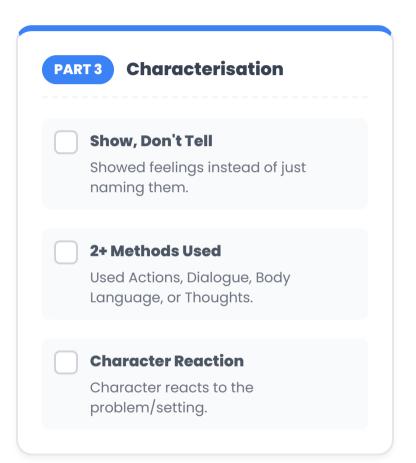
Use actions, body language, or dialogue.

"He looked at his feet and sighed."

Self-Assessment Checklist





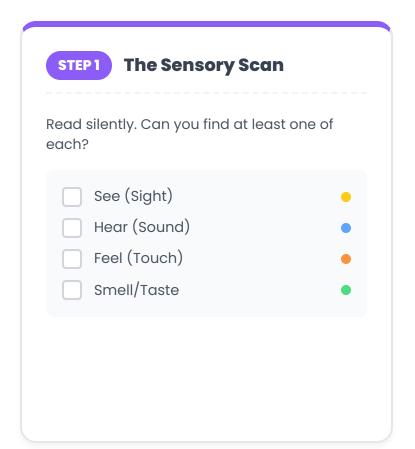


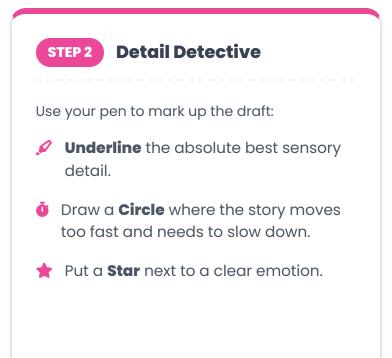


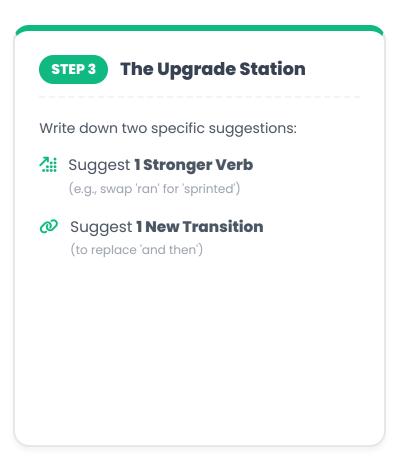
Ready to Publish?

Read your story aloud to yourself. If you stumble over a sentence, it might need smoothing out. If you can't picture the scene, add one more color or sound!

Peer Review Guide: Be a Writing Detective!









The 5 Senses & Character Cheat Sheet



- Light (bright, dim, glowing)
- Color (vivid shades)
- Movement (dart, drift)
- Shape & Size



Smell

- Strength (faint vs. strong)
- Source (where is it?)
- Quality (sweet, acrid)
- Triggers (hunger, disgust)



Taste

- Type (salty, sweet, bitter)
- Mouthfeel (crunchy, smooth)
- Metaphor (taste of fear)
- Aftertaste



Sound

- Volume (loud vs. quiet)
- Type (sudden vs. constant)
- Human sounds (whisper)
- Onomatopoeia (bang, pop)



Touch

- Temperature (hot, icy)
- Texture (rough, silky)
- Body (heart pounding)
- Pressure (heavy, light)



Character

- Actions (what they do)
- Dialogue (what they say)
- Body Language (expressions)
- Thoughts (internal voice)