



# 'SHOW, DON'T TELL' WORKSHEET

'Show, don't tell' is a writing technique that helps writers to put across information to the reader without stating it directly. We could use a character's actions, body language or speech to help the reader understand something about them instead of simply telling them.

## LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT HOW TO USE 'SHOW, DON'T TELL'

### WHAT DO I WANT TO SHOW?

I want to show the reader one of my character's personality traits, which is that he's extremely **impatient**. If I told this to the reader directly, I might say, '**Luca was very impatient**'.

### HOW CAN I SHOW THAT?

- **Actions** - He could tap his feet incessantly and stare at his watch.
- **Speech** - He could sigh or mumble under his breath.

### WHAT ELSE COULD I DO?

I could also put my character in a situation which wouldn't usually frustrate someone such as **waiting in a queue for only a few seconds**.

### LET'S PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

*Though the checkout queue shortened quickly, Luca let out a long, loud sigh, which the cashier acknowledged by rolling her eyes. Tiny vibrations, formed by his left foot, rattled through the old oak floorboards.*



### HELPFUL TIPS

This technique elevates readers' interest because they have to infer what the character is like rather than just being told.

Many people say that 'show, don't tell' is the first rule of writing!

Have fun with this and try out lots of different ideas!

Sometimes, you will need to simply 'tell' the reader things too, but make sure to 'show' where you can.

## YOUR TURN!

Use the 'show, don't tell' technique to inform your reader that **your character is extremely confident**. Remember that you could focus on their physical actions, body language or what they say to convey this. Spend around 10 minutes on this task. Good luck!

