

Show vs. Tell Worksheet for Children's Writers

- Telling is passive: Phillippe was getting the arrow.
- Showing is active (how!): He crawled down the ledge, over the sparkling city, and grabbed the arrow.
- Telling is nonspecific: Albert thought while he drank tea.
- Showing is specific: Albert watched a lump of sugar dissolve, disappearing into his steaming tea.
- Telling is non-sensory: Grandma made pancakes.
- Showing is sensory: Her skillet clangs on the stove.
- Showing uses dialogue: "I am rather inclined to silence," he said.
- Telling avoids dialogue: He said he was usually a quiet person.

Circle a T if the example below **tells** the reader, and S if the example **shows** the reader.

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|---|---|--|
| S | T | Papa's chili was delicious. |
| S | T | Abby said she needed to leave school. |
| S | T | Emma strapped on her skates. |
| S | T | She pointed. "I'm gonna barf!" said Becca. |
| S | T | The porch paint peeled like a sunburn. |
| S | T | Baby Bear did his homework. |
| S | T | Dino sniffed the air. Lilacs? |

Rewrite 2 of the telling sentences above as showing sentences. Compare with a partner.

Rewrite 1 of the showing sentences above as a telling sentence. Compare with a partner.

(Answers: T, T, S, S, S, T, S)