

Parent Guide

How can I use this with my children?

Creative writing can be really challenging for some children. This resource guides your child through how to show a character's emotions, rather than just telling. Simply print and have a go!

How does this help my children's learning?

Support your child's development of creative writing techniques by working through this booklet. Look at the example, try a couple more together and then let them get creative independently.

Ideas for further learning:

For more support with developing writing, head to the [writing](#) section of the Parents' Hub. There are lots of resources, activity ideas and even some parent guides.



Show, Don't Tell Writing Activity

When writing a story, describing how a character is feeling is a key skill. Most authors don't just state how they are feeling. For example, they probably wouldn't say 'James felt scared'. Instead, they try to use description to help the reader understand how the character is feeling. They will often describe their facial expressions, what is happening in their body and perhaps even how their voice sounds.

Read carefully through this example. Then, work through some of the other emotions. Remember... show, don't tell!

Tell: He was scared.

Show:



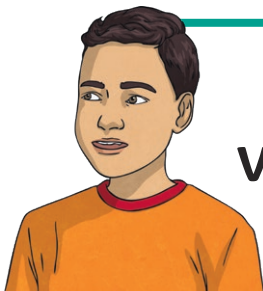
Face

His mouth fell open in horror and his eyes widened in fright.



Body

His whole body was trembling. His hands flew up to cover his face.



Voice

Quivering, he spoke slowly, barely able to get his words out.

Now, have a go yourself.

Tell: He was excited.

Show:



Face



Body



Voice

Tell: He was devastated.

Show:



Face



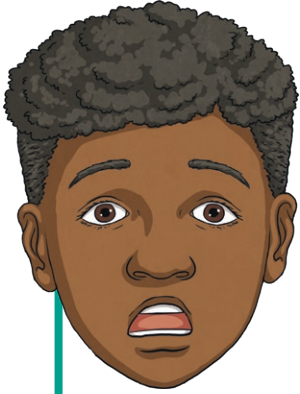
Body



Voice

Tell: He was furious.

Show:



Face



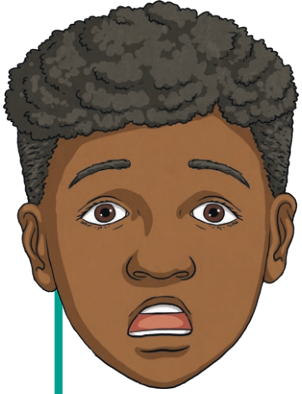
Body



Voice

Tell: He felt calm.

Show:



Face



Body



Voice

Example Answers

Tell – He was excited.	
Show	
Face	His mouth opened wide into the biggest smile it could make. His eyes were wide open and bright.
Body	He jumped up and down with his hands high in the air, clapping his hands.
Voice	He shouted out with glee in his loudest voice.

Tell – He was devastated.	
Show	
Face	His face was scrunched up. There were tears rolling down his cheeks even though his eyes were closed tight.
Body	His body was hunched over. His hands were on top of his head, fingers in his hair as he shook his head from side to side.
Voice	He tried to speak but it felt like there was a lump in his throat. He opened his mouth but no words came out, just a squeak. He couldn't say what he wanted to say. Every time he tried, he cried.

Tell – He was furious.	
Show	
Face	His face was red and blotchy. His mouth was open wide, showing his tightly clenched teeth. His cheeks were raised and his eyes were squinted. His head was shaking.
Body	His body was tense; his shoulders were raised and his fists were clenched. He was stamping his feet hard on the ground.
Voice	His voice was loud and gravelly. He was shouting; his sentences were short and sharp.

Tell – He felt calm.	
Show	
Face	His face was relaxed; his eyes were open and his mouth was closed in a relaxed smile.
Body	His body was loose, hands swaying by his side.
Voice	His voice was slow and steady. When not speaking, his breaths were long and deep.

Tell – He felt calm.	
Show	
Face	His face was relaxed; his eyes were open and his mouth was closed in a relaxed smile.
Body	His body was loose, hands swaying by his side.
Voice	His voice was slow and steady. When not speaking, his breaths were long and deep.

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