ROSSMORE VOCABULARY STUDIO

Choose the writing job. Explore language. Adapt it. Write with purpose.

N — Narrative

Settings, character, action and tension

P — Poetry

Image, sound, rhythm and precision

PR — Persuasion

Position, evidence and audience

FL — Formal letter

Purpose, register and response

NR — Newspaper report

Events, sources and uncertainty

IR — Information report

Classification, facts and cohesion

EX — Explanation

Sequence, cause and mechanism

DI — Discussion

Viewpoints, qualification and balance

RE — Recount

Chronology, significance and reflection

HOW TO USE | WORD LAB | AUTHOR'S CHOICE | TEACHER MODE | Upper KS2

How to use the Vocabulary Studio

A five-step route from choice to an original sentence

PUPIL GUIDE

Rossmore School

1 SEE

Name the writing job and the effect you want.

2 SELECT

Choose words and phrases that belong together.

3 COMBINE

Use a frame to test how the choices connect.

4 ADAPT

Change at least one word, detail or structure.

5 CREATE

Write your own sentence and read it aloud.

THREE RULES FOR STRONG CHOICES

Choose for meaning, not difficulty.
Keep one clear mood or register.
Borrow a possibility, then make it yours.

If a word is unfamiliar

Ask what it means, test it in a sentence and decide whether it truly fits. A simpler exact word is stronger than an impressive wrong one.

BACK TO HOME

Narrative

Choose the area that needs language

Setting and atmosphere
Choose a place and decide the mood before selecting vocabulary.

Movement and action
Choose a verb that shows manner, pace and intention.

Emotion
Show emotion through behaviour, thought, sensation and choice.

Weather and nature
Let weather affect visibility, movement, sound or mood.

Character appearance
Select details that reveal character, not a head-to-toe list.

Voice and dialogue
Match word choice, volume and punctuation to the speaker's intention.

Tension and suspense
Control what the reader knows, notices and expects.

Start with purpose: place, character, action, voice, emotion, tension or weather.

Setting and atmosphere

Choose a place and decide the mood before selecting vocabulary.

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Dark night	Cave	Beautiful landscape
Forest	Storm	Beach and coast
Mountain	Busy city	Abandoned place
Old building interior	Winter setting	Summer setting
Mysterious setting	Dangerous setting	Peaceful setting

Dark night

Create one clear night-time mood.

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1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

moonless	shadowed	starless	indistinct
isolated	**nocturnal**	**ominous**	**pitch-black**

2 VERB VAULT

- loomed
- flickered
- crept
- swallowed
- pierced
- prowled

3 PHRASE BANK

- beneath a starless sky
- beyond the reach of moonlight
- at the edge of the shadows
- against the blackened skyline
- through the waiting darkness

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

rustling leaves / a distant scrape / brittle footsteps / one wavering light

Beyond the trees, Somewhere in the darkness, Without warning, For a moment,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Beyond the trees, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. rustling leaves: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

peaceful > mysterious > uneasy > threatening

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Cave

Make the cave feel ancient, cramped or dangerous.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

jagged	hollow	subterranean	cramped
damp	**lightless**	**echoing**	**ancient**

2 VERB VAULT

- dripped
- echoed
- narrowed
- gaped
- coiled
- glimmered

3 PHRASE BANK

- beneath a roof of stone
- through a slit in the rock
- along the slick wall
- into the cavern's depths
- under crooked teeth of stone

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

mineral tang / cold stone / circling echoes / black water

Inside the cave, Deeper underground, Beyond the narrow ledge, From the darkness,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Inside the cave, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. mineral tang: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

sheltered > strange > claustrophobic > perilous

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Beautiful landscape

Select details that create wonder without listing everything.

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1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

sweeping	verdant	luminous	tranquil
unspoilt	**distant**	**sunlit**	**majestic**

2 VERB VAULT

- unfurled
- glowed
- shimmered
- stretched
- curved
- blossomed

3 PHRASE BANK

- across the open valley
- under a clear horizon
- in folds of green
- beside the silver water
- bathed in gentle light

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

warm grass / birdsong / bright water / a clean breeze

Across the valley, In the distance, Under the wide sky, Where the land dipped,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Across the valley, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. warm grass: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

pleasant > serene > breathtaking > awe-inspiring

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Forest

Control whether the forest feels welcoming, secretive or hostile.

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1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

leafy	dense	ancient	tangled
mossy	**secluded**	**shadowed**	**towering**

2 VERB VAULT

- rustled
- twisted
- arched
- crowded
- filtered
- snagged

3 PHRASE BANK

- beneath the green canopy
- between the crowded trunks
- along a root-tangled path
- under curtains of ivy
- where sunlight broke through

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

damp bark / crushed leaves / woodsmoke / branches clicking

Among the trees, Further along the path, High above, Behind the ferns,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Among the trees, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. damp bark: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

welcoming > secretive > uneasy > hostile

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Storm

Build power through movement, sound and precise verbs.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

violent	turbulent	relentless	electric
blackened	**sudden**	**deafening**	**savage**

2 VERB VAULT

- lashed
- hammered
- ripped
- boomed
- churned
- splintered

3 PHRASE BANK

- beneath the boiling clouds
- across the exposed ground
- in sheets of rain
- through the shaken branches
- under a bruised sky

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

metallic rain / white lightning / roaring gutters / air charged with static

Above them, Within seconds, Across the horizon, As the sky darkened,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Above them, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. metallic rain: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

unsettled > wild > ferocious > catastrophic

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Beach and coast

Choose details that match a calm shore or a dangerous coast.

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1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

salt-bright	windswept	sheltered	rocky
tidal	**sun-bleached**	**foaming**	**remote**

2 VERB VAULT

- surged
- lapped
- crashed
- retreated
- scattered
- glistened

3 PHRASE BANK

- along the tideline
- beneath the chalk cliffs
- across the wet sand
- beyond the sheltering bay
- under wheeling gulls

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

salt spray / gritty sand / seaweed tang / pebbles rattling

At the water's edge, Beyond the dunes, Along the coast, Far out at sea,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At the water's edge, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. salt spray: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

calm > brisk > restless > dangerous

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Mountain

Show scale, height and exposure through exact detail.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

lofty	craggy	snow-capped	sheer
remote	**exposed**	**rugged**	**formidable**

2 VERB VAULT

- towered
- rose
- plunged
- cut
- shouldered
- vanished

3 PHRASE BANK

- above the cloud line
- along the narrow ridge
- under a crown of snow
- across the barren slope
- at the foot of the peak

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

thin air / loose stone / biting wind / distant eagle cry

High above, Along the ridge, Below the summit, Beyond the pass,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. High above, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. thin air: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

impressive > daunting > forbidding > overwhelming

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Busy city

Create pace and density without turning the description into a list.

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1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

crowded	restless	towering	neon-lit
congested	**noisy**	**hurried**	**labyrinthine**

2 VERB VAULT

- streamed
- jostled
- flashed
- rumbled
- spilled
- surged

3 PHRASE BANK

- between walls of glass
- beneath pulsing signs
- through the packed crossing
- along the traffic-choked avenue
- under a web of wires

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

hot pavement / engine fumes / snatches of music / brakes squealing

At the crossing, Around the corner, Above the traffic, All around them,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At the crossing, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. hot pavement: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

lively > hectic > overwhelming > chaotic

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Abandoned place

Suggest a past life through selected traces and gaps.

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1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

derelict	neglected	silent	boarded-up
weathered	**forsaken**	**crumbling**	**vacant**

2 VERB VAULT

- sagged
- peeled
- rusted
- gaped
- collapsed
- lingered

3 PHRASE BANK

- behind a broken gate
- beneath layers of dust
- through the empty rooms
- among the scattered remains
- where voices once gathered

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

stale air / flaking paint / glass crunching / a stopped clock

Inside the entrance, Across the empty floor, In one corner, Beyond the locked door,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Inside the entrance, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. stale air: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

empty > lonely > unsettling > haunted

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Old building interior

Use age, texture and small details to imply history.

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1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

timeworn	panelled	dusty	ornate
faded	**draughty**	**shadowed**	**uneven**

2 VERB VAULT

- creaked
- settled
- groaned
- gleamed
- peeled
- tilted

3 PHRASE BANK

- under a stained ceiling
- along the narrow corridor
- behind a heavy door
- beneath faded portraits
- across warped floorboards

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

beeswax / cold iron / clock ticks / dust in sunlight

Inside the hall, At the top of the stairs, Behind the door, Along the wall,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Inside the hall, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. beeswax: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

curious > historic > uncanny > foreboding

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Winter setting

Create cold through evidence rather than repeatedly naming it.

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1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

frost-bound	bleak	crystalline	snow-laden
brittle	**colourless**	**icy**	**still**

2 VERB VAULT

- froze
- crunched
- glittered
- stiffened
- whitened
- numbed

3 PHRASE BANK

- beneath a hard white sky
- across the frozen ground
- under the weight of snow
- through the stinging air
- beside an ice-locked stream

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

visible breath / numb fingers / dry snow / silent fields

By morning, Across the white landscape,
Underfoot, In the frozen air,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. By morning, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. visible breath: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

crisp > cold > bitter > merciless

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Summer setting

Select heat, light and movement that fit the scene.

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1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

sun-drenched	hazy	parched	golden
humid	**blazing**	**lush**	**drowsy**

2 VERB VAULT

- shimmered
- buzzed
- blazed
- wilted
- ripened
- drifted

3 PHRASE BANK

- beneath the midday sun
- through the wavering heat
- among the long grasses
- under a cloudless sky
- beside the warm river

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

cut grass / insect hum / hot stone / sweet fruit

At midday, Across the fields, In the shade, As evening approached,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At midday, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. cut grass: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

warm > radiant > sweltering > oppressive

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Mysterious setting

Withhold enough information to create curiosity.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

unfamiliar	veiled	hidden	peculiar
unmapped	**silent**	**enigmatic**	**shifting**

2 VERB VAULT

- hovered
- vanished
- beckoned
- concealed
- glimmered
- waited

3 PHRASE BANK

- just beyond sight
- behind a curtain of mist
- at the edge of the map
- beneath an unknown symbol
- where the path divided

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

a repeated mark / unseen movement / a low hum / footprints ending suddenly

No one had noticed, At first glance, Beyond the boundary, Without explanation,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. No one had noticed, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. a repeated mark: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

curious > puzzling > uncanny > disturbing

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Dangerous setting

Make the risk specific and physically believable.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

unstable	treacherous	exposed	hazardous
crumbling	**volatile**	**unforgiving**	**deadly**

2 VERB VAULT

- buckled
- shifted
- snapped
- plunged
- erupted
- gave way

3 PHRASE BANK

- above a sheer drop
- across unstable ground
- beneath the fractured ledge
- within reach of the flames
- through the collapsing passage

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

loose rubble / scorching air / warning cracks / limited footing

Ahead of them, Without warning, At the next step, Below the ledge,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Ahead of them, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. loose rubble: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

risky > hazardous > perilous > deadly

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Peaceful setting

Create calm through restraint, space and gentle movement.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

tranquil	still	secluded	untroubled
soft-lit	**restful**	**open**	**hushed**

2 VERB VAULT

- drifted
- murmured
- settled
- glided
- swayed
- rested

3 PHRASE BANK

- beneath a pale sky
- beside the quiet water
- through the soft grass
- under the shade of willows
- far from the road

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

water murmuring / warm earth / slow clouds / leaves turning

By the water, For a while, In the distance, As the light softened,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. By the water, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. water murmuring: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

quiet > restful > serene > perfectly still

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Character appearance

Select details that reveal character, not a head-to-toe list.

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- Heroic
- Threatening
- Mysterious
- Vulnerable
- Elderly
- Powerful
- Untrustworthy
- Exhausted

Heroic

Suggest courage through posture, choices and controlled detail.

NARRATIVE / CHARACTER APPEARANCE

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1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

steadfast	alert	weathered	upright
resolute	**protective**	**scarred**	**composed**

2 VERB VAULT

- stood
- shielded
- scanned
- steadied
- advanced
- endured

3 PHRASE BANK

- with shoulders squared
- despite the shaking ground
- between danger and the crowd
- without lowering their gaze
- with quiet certainty

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

scarred knuckles / steady breathing / mud-streaked clothes / a level stare

At the front, Even then, Without hesitation, When others stepped back,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At the front, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. scarred knuckles: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

brave > steadfast > fearless > self-sacrificing

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Threatening

Create threat through controlled behaviour rather than labels.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

imposing	hard-eyed	heavy-set	cold
scarred	**unreadable**	**unyielding**	**menacing**

2 VERB VAULT

- loomed
- blocked
- stalked
- glared
- closed in
- waited

3 PHRASE BANK

- without breaking eye contact
- with deliberate slowness
- across the only exit
- in a voice barely above a whisper
- with fists loosely clenched

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

still hands / tight jaw / measured steps / a flat smile

In the doorway, Without a word, Step by step, From across the room,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. In the doorway, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. still hands: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

stern > intimidating > menacing > terrifying

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Mysterious

Reveal selected clues while keeping identity or motive uncertain.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

hooded	elusive	unfamiliar	veiled
watchful	**silent**	**unreadable**	**anonymous**

2 VERB VAULT

- observed
- withdrew
- concealed
- appeared
- lingered
- vanished

3 PHRASE BANK

- half hidden by shadow
- with their face turned away
- without giving a name
- at the edge of the gathering
- behind darkened lenses

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

gloved hands / a sealed letter / an unfamiliar accent / a distinctive ring

At the edge of the crowd, For one second, Whenever anyone looked, Before a question formed,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At the edge of the crowd, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. gloved hands: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

unknown > secretive > enigmatic > deeply suspicious

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Vulnerable

Show vulnerability respectfully through context and behaviour.

NARRATIVE / CHARACTER APPEARANCE

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

exposed	unsteady	weary	small
hesitant	**injured**	**isolated**	**defenceless**

2 VERB VAULT

- flinched
- wavered
- clung
- shivered
- hesitated
- folded

3 PHRASE BANK

- with nowhere left to turn
- beneath an oversized coat
- against the rising wind
- with one arm held close
- at the back of the group

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

muddy knees / torn sleeve / shallow breaths / downcast eyes

Left alone, At the sudden noise, For support, When the door opened,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Left alone, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. muddy knees: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

uncertain > fragile > vulnerable > defenceless

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Elderly

Describe age with dignity and specific observable detail.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

silver-haired	lined	stooped	careful
measured	**bright-eyed**	**frail**	**distinguished**

2 VERB VAULT

- shuffled
- peered
- adjusted
- lowered
- recalled
- straightened

3 PHRASE BANK

- with years mapped across the face
- behind thick lenses
- leaning lightly on a cane
- with deliberate care
- in a voice softened by age

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

polished walking stick / creased hands / neat collar / clear gaze

By the fire, With practised hands, After a pause, Despite the years,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. By the fire, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. polished walking stick: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

aged > frail > dignified > formidable

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Powerful

Show power through impact, control and how others respond.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

commanding	broad-shouldered	composed	authoritative
formidable	**immovable**	**controlled**	**dominant**

2 VERB VAULT

- commanded
- surveyed
- silenced
- occupied
- towered
- dismissed

3 PHRASE BANK

- at the centre of the room
- with effortless authority
- without raising their voice
- as conversations stopped
- with every movement controlled

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

tailored coat / steady hands / direct gaze / space opening around them

When they entered, At a single glance, Without effort, Before anyone objected,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. When they entered, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. tailored coat: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

confident > commanding > formidable > overpowering

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Untrustworthy

Suggest doubt through inconsistency and concealed reactions.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

evasive	restless	smooth-talking	watchful
guarded	**calculating**	**insincere**	**slippery**

2 VERB VAULT

- avoided
- deflected
- glanced
- concealed
- smirked
- rehearsed

3 PHRASE BANK

- with an answer ready too quickly
- without meeting anyone's eyes
- while edging towards the door
- behind a practised smile
- with fingers tapping beneath the table

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

changing story / hidden message / false warmth / eyes on the exit

When questioned, For a moment, Behind the smile, Each time the subject changed,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. When questioned, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. changing story: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

uncertain > evasive > deceptive > treacherous

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Exhausted

Show tiredness through body, attention and effort.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

drained	heavy-limbed	hollow-eyed	weary
spent	**sluggish**	**unsteady**	**faint**

2 VERB VAULT

- dragged
- slumped
- stumbled
- sagged
- blinked
- laboured

3 PHRASE BANK

- with every step an effort
- beneath the weight of the journey
- barely able to focus
- against the nearest wall
- with shoulders bowed

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

dry mouth / aching calves / blurred vision / slow breaths

By the time they arrived, After the climb, At last, With the final effort,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. By the time they arrived, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. dry mouth: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

tired > weary > exhausted > utterly spent

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Movement and action

Choose a verb that shows manner, pace and intention.

Rossmore School

- Cautious movement
- Fast movement
- Escape and chase
- Entering a place
- Searching
- Fighting and struggling
- Falling
- Discovery

Cautious movement

Slow the action and make each movement deliberate.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

careful	measured	tentative	silent
deliberate	**wary**	**stealthy**	**controlled**

2 VERB VAULT

- edged
- crept
- inched
- tested
- paused
- slipped

3 PHRASE BANK

- one foot at a time
- keeping close to the wall
- with weight carefully balanced
- without disturbing the dust
- towards the narrow opening

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

held breath / loose floorboard / listening pause / hands outstretched

Step by step, After listening, Keeping low, Before moving again,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Step by step, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. held breath: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

careful > wary > stealthy > almost motionless

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Fast movement

Create speed with exact verbs and selective detail.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

rapid	headlong	swift	breathless
urgent	**sudden**	**frantic**	**explosive**

2 VERB VAULT

- sprinted
- hurtled
- darted
- raced
- bounded
- charged

3 PHRASE BANK

- at full speed
- through the open gate
- with no time to look back
- across the uneven ground
- past a blur of faces

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

pounding feet / burning lungs / wind-torn eyes / objects flashing past

At once, In a burst of movement, Before anyone reacted, Without slowing,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At once, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. pounding feet: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

quick > rapid > frantic > breakneck

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Escape and chase

Keep the goal, obstacle and changing distance clear.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

pursued	cornered	urgent	narrow
blocked	**relentless**	**desperate**	**closing**

2 VERB VAULT

- fled
- pursued
- swerved
- scrambled
- vaulted
- gained

3 PHRASE BANK

- with footsteps close behind
- towards the only exit
- over the fallen barrier
- as the gap narrowed
- without risking a glance back

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

shouts behind / locked gate / slippery turn / stitch in side

Behind them, At the next corner, With seconds to spare, As the pursuer gained,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Behind them, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. shouts behind: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

alert > urgent > desperate > inescapable

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Entering a place

Make the threshold and first impression matter.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

hesitant	unexpected	forbidden	grand
narrow	**silent**	**crowded**	**unfamiliar**

2 VERB VAULT

- crossed
- stepped
- ducked
- pushed
- slipped
- strode

3 PHRASE BANK

- across the threshold
- through the half-open door
- into the waiting room
- beneath the stone arch
- past the warning sign

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

change in temperature / hinge groan / new smell / eyes adjusting

At the entrance, As the door opened, On the other side, The moment they entered,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At the entrance, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. change in temperature: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

curious > cautious > uneasy > bold

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Searching

Direct attention through purposeful scanning and clues.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

methodical	frantic	hidden	overlooked
scattered	**narrow**	**thorough**	**urgent**

2 VERB VAULT

- searched
- scanned
- rummaged
- examined
- traced
- uncovered

3 PHRASE BANK

- beneath the loose boards
- among the scattered papers
- behind the final shelf
- along the marked edge
- where dust had been disturbed

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

fresh scratch / missing object / shifted rug / faint footprint

First, In the far corner, After checking again, Almost hidden,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. First, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. fresh scratch: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

casual > careful > thorough > desperate

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Fighting and struggling

Keep actions clear and show effort, balance and consequence.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

fierce	close	uneven	desperate
brutal	**controlled**	**chaotic**	**relentless**

2 VERB VAULT

- grappled
- blocked
- twisted
- struck
- wrenched
- staggered

3 PHRASE BANK

- with both feet braced
- against the crushing force
- before the next blow
- across the confined space
- with grip beginning to fail

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

split lip / sliding boots / ragged breath / ringing impact

At close range, Using the last of their strength, As the balance shifted, Before either could recover,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At close range, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. split lip: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

tense > fierce > desperate > savage

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Falling

Control pace by showing loss of balance, descent and impact.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

sudden	weightless	uncontrolled	dizzying
steep	**endless**	**violent**	**awkward**

2 VERB VAULT

- slipped
- tumbled
- plunged
- dropped
- pitched
- crashed

3 PHRASE BANK

- over the broken edge
- through open air
- down the loose slope
- with arms reaching blindly
- towards the dark water

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

stomach lifting / air rushing / stone scraping / impact jolting

For one second, Without warning, As the ground vanished, Before a hand could reach them,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. For one second, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. stomach lifting: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

stumble > drop > plunge > catastrophic fall

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Discovery

Make the moment of finding something change understanding.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

unexpected	concealed	ancient	intact
impossible	**long-lost**	**significant**	**revealing**

2 VERB VAULT

- noticed
- uncovered
- recognised
- revealed
- retrieved
- decoded

3 PHRASE BANK

- beneath the false panel
- inside the sealed box
- where no map showed a room
- under years of dust
- within the final line

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

familiar initials / unbroken seal / hidden mechanism / date that changed everything

At first, Only then, Beneath the surface, When the light shifted,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At first, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. familiar initials: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

interesting > surprising > astonishing > world-changing

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Voice and dialogue

Match word choice, volume and punctuation to the speaker's intention.

Rossmore School

- Whispering
- Shouting
- Nervous speech
- Angry speech
- Confident speech
- Hesitant speech
- Secretive speech
- Formal and authoritative speech

Whispering

Use quiet speech for privacy, fear or intimacy.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

hushed	breathless	faint	urgent
confidential	**trembling**	**barely audible**	**careful**

2 VERB VAULT

- whispered
- murmured
- breathed
- muttered
- confided
- hissed

3 PHRASE BANK

- under their breath
- close to her ear
- without moving their lips
- so softly it was almost lost
- behind a raised hand

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

eyes on the doorway / shared glance / tight breath / near silence

Leaning closer, After checking the corridor, In a low voice, Barely moving,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Leaning closer, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. eyes on the doorway: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

soft > hushed > secretive > urgent

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Shouting

Show the reason for volume and its effect on others.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

piercing	booming	furious	commanding
frantic	**hoarse**	**sharp**	**deafening**

2 VERB VAULT

- shouted
- bellowed
- roared
- called
- shrieked
- thundered

3 PHRASE BANK

- across the crowded hall
- above the engine noise
- until their voice cracked
- with both hands cupped
- from the far side

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

heads turning / echo returning / birds scattering / words breaking

Across the noise, At the top of his voice, When no one listened, From below,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Across the noise, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. heads turning: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

loud > forceful > furious > deafening

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Nervous speech

Reveal uncertainty through pauses, corrections and guarded words.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

hesitant	broken	uncertain	rushed
uneven	**guarded**	**thin**	**awkward**

2 VERB VAULT

- stammered
- faltered
- mumbled
- hesitated
- corrected
- trailed off

3 PHRASE BANK

- after a long pause
- with the final word fading
- too quickly to sound natural
- while twisting a sleeve
- without finishing the thought

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

dry swallow / repeated word / avoided gaze / forced laugh

After hesitating, Looking down, In a thin voice, Before changing the subject,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. After hesitating, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. dry swallow: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

unsure > hesitant > anxious > panicked

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Angry speech

Choose controlled or explosive anger to fit the character.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

clipped	bitter	accusing	cold
furious	**cutting**	**restrained**	**explosive**

2 VERB VAULT

- snapped
- spat
- demanded
- accused
- growled
- retorted

3 PHRASE BANK

- through clenched teeth
- with each word sharpened
- before slamming the table
- in a voice stripped of warmth
- without allowing an answer

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

tight jaw / rising volume / short sentences / pointing hand

Without looking away, After a tense silence, In a clipped voice, Losing control,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Without looking away, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. tight jaw: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

irritated > angry > furious > enraged

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Confident speech

Show certainty through concise language and controlled delivery.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

clear	assured	steady	direct
decisive	**composed**	**authoritative**	**unwavering**

2 VERB VAULT

- stated
- declared
- explained
- confirmed
- insisted
- replied

3 PHRASE BANK

- without consulting the notes
- in an even voice
- so that everyone heard
- with quiet certainty
- before anyone could object

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

measured pace / level gaze / open posture / precise wording

With no hesitation, Facing the room, Calmly, After considering the question,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. With no hesitation, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. measured pace: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

certain > assured > commanding > unshakeable

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Hesitant speech

Use uncertainty when a speaker is choosing words carefully.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

careful	tentative	uncertain	halting
qualified	**reluctant**	**incomplete**	**cautious**

2 VERB VAULT

- began
- paused
- suggested
- admitted
- wondered
- reconsidered

3 PHRASE BANK

- as if testing each word
- before starting again
- with a question in the voice
- after glancing for approval
- without quite committing

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

half-raised hand / unfinished sentence / quiet correction / nervous pause

Perhaps, After a moment, Choosing the words carefully, With some reluctance,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Perhaps, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. half-raised hand: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

tentative > hesitant > reluctant > unable to continue

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Secretive speech

Create concealment through coded, indirect or incomplete language.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

coded	guarded	vague	cryptic
indirect	**private**	**concealed**	**careful**

2 VERB VAULT

- hinted
- warned
- implied
- confided
- withheld
- evaded

3 PHRASE BANK

- using the agreed phrase
- without naming the place
- in words meant for one person
- while watching the others
- leaving the sentence unfinished

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

folded note / changed subject / shared signal / careful pronoun

When no one was listening, Using the code name, With a meaningful glance, Before they separated,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. When no one was listening, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. folded note: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

private > guarded > cryptic > dangerously revealing

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Formal and authoritative speech

Match respectful, precise language to role and context.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

formal	measured	official	precise
controlled	**impartial**	**firm**	**ceremonial**

2 VERB VAULT

- announced
- instructed
- confirmed
- requested
- advised
- concluded

3 PHRASE BANK

- for the attention of everyone present
- in accordance with the rules
- with immediate effect
- after careful consideration
- on behalf of the council

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

complete sentences / formal address / technical term / deliberate pause

Members of the council, For the record, Following our review, With respect,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Members of the council, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. complete sentences: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

polite > formal > authoritative > final

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Emotion

Show emotion through behaviour, thought, sensation and choice.

Rossmore School

- Fear
- Anger
- Happiness
- Sadness
- Nervousness
- Excitement
- Confusion
- Determination
- Relief
- Jealousy

Fear

Let the reader infer fear from a precise reaction.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

uneasy	apprehensive	alarmed	terrified
exposed	**breathless**	**frozen**	**panicked**

2 VERB VAULT

- flinched
- recoiled
- froze
- trembled
- retreated
- startled

3 PHRASE BANK

- with pulse hammering
- unable to look away
- as every instinct warned them
- with breath held tight
- towards the nearest cover

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

cold skin / dry mouth / tunnel vision / shaking hands

At the sound, For one dreadful second, Before thinking, As the danger approached,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At the sound, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. cold skin: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

uneasy > afraid > terrified > panic-stricken

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Anger

Choose whether anger is contained, rising or explosive.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

irritated	resentful	indignant	furious
seething	**bitter**	**outraged**	**incensed**

2 VERB VAULT

- bristled
- snapped
- glared
- seethed
- erupted
- slammed

3 PHRASE BANK

- with heat rising through the chest
- behind a rigid expression
- at the final insult
- before control returned
- with every word clipped

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

tight fists / flushed cheeks / hard stare / shallow breaths

At first, With each excuse, By then, Unable to remain silent,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At first, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. tight fists: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

annoyed > angry > furious > incensed

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Happiness

Create a specific kind of happiness rather than a generic smile.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

content	delighted	buoyant	radiant
relieved	**gleeful**	**warm**	**exuberant**

2 VERB VAULT

- beamed
- laughed
- brightened
- bounded
- relaxed
- celebrated

3 PHRASE BANK

- with joy bubbling up
- unable to hide the grin
- as the news settled in
- surrounded by familiar voices
- with shoulders suddenly light

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

warm cheeks / easy laughter / quick steps / bright eyes

At the news, For the first time that day, Among friends, As the result appeared,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At the news, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. warm cheeks: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

pleased > happy > delighted > overjoyed

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Sadness

Show sadness with restraint and detail suited to the moment.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

downcast	hollow	subdued	heartbroken
lonely	**grief-stricken**	**numb**	**wistful**

2 VERB VAULT

- sagged
- withdrew
- stared
- folded
- swallowed
- wept

3 PHRASE BANK

- with words refusing to come
- as the room emptied
- holding the last reminder
- behind a carefully calm face
- with a heaviness that remained

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

silent phone / creased photograph / slow blink / cold cup

After everyone left, In the quiet, For a long time, When the memory returned,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. After everyone left, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. silent phone: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

subdued > sad > miserable > heartbroken

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Nervousness

Use anticipation, self-conscious movement and interrupted thought.

NARRATIVE / EMOTION

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

restless	awkward	tense	self-conscious
uneasy	**jittery**	**uncertain**	**on edge**

2 VERB VAULT

- fidgeted
- shifted
- twisted
- checked
- hovered
- rushed

3 PHRASE BANK

- while rehearsing the first line
- with fingers refusing to stay still
- as the moment approached
- behind a fixed smile
- before the name was called

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

tapping foot / damp palms / quick glance / fluttering stomach

Waiting outside, Each time the door opened, Trying to appear calm, As the clock moved,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Waiting outside, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. tapping foot: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

uncertain > nervous > anxious > overwhelmed

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Excitement

Build eager energy without using repeated exclamation marks.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

eager	animated	thrilled	restless
electric	**breathless**	**impatient**	**exhilarated**

2 VERB VAULT

- rushed
- bounced
- grinned
- burst
- leaned
- chattered

3 PHRASE BANK

- with anticipation fizzing
- unable to remain seated
- as the countdown began
- with questions tumbling out
- towards the long-awaited moment

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

fast speech / wide eyes / quick hands / racing thoughts

At last, As the doors opened, With seconds remaining, The moment had arrived,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At last, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. fast speech: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

interested > eager > thrilled > exhilarated

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Confusion

Show the gap between what the character expects and notices.

NARRATIVE / EMOTION

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

puzzled	uncertain	disoriented	perplexed
bewildered	**conflicted**	**lost**	**incredulous**

2 VERB VAULT

- frowned
- re-read
- hesitated
- searched
- questioned
- misunderstood

3 PHRASE BANK

- as the pieces refused to fit
- with no memory of arriving
- while the instructions contradicted themselves
- at a detail that made no sense
- trying to reconstruct the order

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

wrong date / missing step / familiar place altered / two conflicting messages

At first, Looking again, The more they considered it, Something did not fit,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At first, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. wrong date: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

unsure > puzzled > bewildered > completely disoriented

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Determination

Show commitment through purposeful action and resistance.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

resolute	focused	steadfast	unyielding
persistent	**disciplined**	**driven**	**undaunted**

2 VERB VAULT

- persisted
- pressed on
- steadied
- endured
- committed
- refused

3 PHRASE BANK

- despite the setback
- with the goal fixed in mind
- one careful step at a time
- after every failed attempt
- without asking for an easier route

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

resetting tools / checking plan / tired muscles / steady gaze

Even after the failure, By dawn, With renewed focus, Whatever happened,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Even after the failure, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. resetting tools: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

willing > committed > determined > unyielding

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Relief

Show tension leaving the body after uncertainty ends.

NARRATIVE / EMOTION

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

reassured	light-headed	released	grateful
safe	**unburdened**	**calmer**	**drained**

2 VERB VAULT

- exhaled
- softened
- sagged
- laughed
- released
- settled

3 PHRASE BANK

- as the danger passed
- when the familiar voice answered
- with the result finally known
- after the lock clicked open
- as strength returned to the knees

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

long breath / loose shoulders / shaky laugh / closed eyes

Only then, At the confirmation, When the lights appeared, For the first time,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Only then, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. long breath: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

reassured > relieved > deeply grateful > overcome

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Jealousy

Reveal comparison, resentment and concealed desire.

NARRATIVE / EMOTION

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

envious	resentful	excluded	possessive
bitter	**competitive**	**insecure**	**watchful**

2 VERB VAULT

- compared
- coveted
- resented
- dismissed
- watched
- interrupted

3 PHRASE BANK

- while pretending not to care
- at every mention of the prize
- from the edge of the group
- with praise ringing in their ears
- behind a thin congratulations

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

fixed smile / tight reply / eyes on the trophy / sudden criticism

As the applause began, From the back, When the name was announced, Although they smiled,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. As the applause began, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. fixed smile: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

left out > envious > resentful > consumed by jealousy

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Tension and suspense

Control what the reader knows, notices and expects.

Rossmore School

- Something is wrong
- Being followed
- Approaching danger
- Sudden silence
- Mysterious sound
- A reveal
- Narrow escape
- Cliffhanger

Something is wrong

Plant a small, specific detail that breaks the normal pattern.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

unusual	misplaced	silent	disturbed
unanswered	**uneven**	**wrong**	**unfamiliar**

2 VERB VAULT

- noticed
- paused
- checked
- listened
- returned
- stilled

3 PHRASE BANK

- where it should not have been
- in the middle of the ordinary scene
- with no obvious explanation
- despite the locked door
- after the signal stopped

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

open window / cold mug / missing coat / clock reset

At first, Almost everything seemed normal, Then, On the second look,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At first, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. open window: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

odd > concerning > alarming > deeply wrong

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Being followed

Use repeated signs and changing distance to build certainty.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

persistent	unseen	measured	distant
closing	**shadowy**	**deliberate**	**relentless**

2 VERB VAULT

- trailed
- matched
- paused
- followed
- quickened
- closed in

3 PHRASE BANK

- at exactly the same pace
- two corners behind
- whenever she stopped
- just outside the light
- without ever showing a face

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

second set of steps / reflection in glass / door closing / shape across road

Behind her, At the next turn, When she stopped, In the shop window,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Behind her, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. second set of steps: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

suspected > watched > followed > hunted

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Approaching danger

Signal danger through evidence before revealing it fully.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

gathering	distant	unstable	advancing
unavoidable	**hidden**	**imminent**	**hostile**

2 VERB VAULT

- neared
- rumbled
- spread
- darkened
- tightened
- emerged

3 PHRASE BANK

- beyond the final ridge
- with every warning ignored
- as the sound grew louder
- under the trembling ground
- just outside their view

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

birds fleeing / air changing / warning light / distant vibration

In the distance, Minute by minute, Before they saw it, Across the ground,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. In the distance, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. birds fleeing: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

possible > likely > imminent > inescapable

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Sudden silence

Use the absence of expected sound as a warning.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

abrupt	unnatural	complete	waiting
hollow	**heavy**	**unnerving**	**absolute**

2 VERB VAULT

- ceased
- died
- stilled
- vanished
- hung
- pressed

3 PHRASE BANK

- where noise had filled the air
- all at once
- as if the world were listening
- between one beat and the next
- throughout the crowded building

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

machine stopped / birds quiet / voices cut off / ringing ears

Without warning, In the next instant, Across the room, Then came,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Without warning, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. machine stopped: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

quiet > strange > unnerving > terrifying

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Mysterious sound

Make the sound precise but keep its source uncertain.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

faint	irregular	scraping	muffled
distant	**metallic**	**low**	**repeated**

2 VERB VAULT

- scratched
- tapped
- dragged
- thudded
- whined
- echoed

3 PHRASE BANK

- from beyond the wall
- somewhere below
- at uneven intervals
- too close to ignore
- through the ventilation shaft

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

three taps / chain dragging / floor creak / low vibration

From upstairs, Again, After a pause, Beneath the floor,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. From upstairs, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. three taps: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

faint > noticeable > disturbing > impossible to ignore

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

A reveal

Make one new fact change the reader's understanding.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

concealed	unexpected	recognisable	impossible
deliberate	**final**	**revealing**	**decisive**

2 VERB VAULT

- opened
- unmasked
- turned
- admitted
- uncovered
- displayed

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

matching scar / known handwriting / hidden camera / family emblem

Only then, When the hood fell back, On the final page, In that instant,

3 PHRASE BANK

- beneath the false name
- behind the final door
- inside the photograph
- when the message was decoded
- after years of silence

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Only then, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. matching scar: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

surprising > shocking > devastating > transformative

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Narrow escape

Show exact timing, risk and consequence.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

last-second	breathless	slim	desperate
dangerous	**impossible**	**fortunate**	**shaken**

2 VERB VAULT

- ducked
- leapt
- swerved
- cleared
- escaped
- scrambled

3 PHRASE BANK

- with seconds remaining
- as the gap slammed shut
- by the width of a hand
- before the structure collapsed
- into the only safe space

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

heat at back / falling debris / torn sleeve / alarm sounding

Just before, At the final second, As the danger struck, Somehow,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Just before, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. heat at back: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

close > narrow > desperate > miraculous

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Cliffhanger

End with a meaningful unanswered change or threat.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

unanswered	unexpected	final	approaching
hidden	**recognisable**	**impossible**	**unfinished**

2 VERB VAULT

- appeared
- clicked
- whispered
- opened
- stopped
- returned

3 PHRASE BANK

- on the other side of the door
- in the final line
- behind her reflection
- just as the lights failed
- where no one should have been

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

unknown caller / turning key / missing name / shadow moving

Then, At that exact moment, Before he could answer, The screen displayed,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Then, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. unknown caller: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

question > warning > revelation > immediate danger

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Weather and nature

Let weather affect visibility, movement, sound or mood.

Rossmore School

- Rain
- Wind
- Snow
- Heat
- Fog and mist
- Thunder and lightning
- Sunrise and sunset
- Sea and waves

Rain

Choose rain by strength, sound and impact.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

fine	steady	driving	torrential
cold	**silver**	**relentless**	**sudden**

2 VERB VAULT

- drummed
- lashed
- spattered
- streamed
- soaked
- blurred

3 PHRASE BANK

- in slanting sheets
- against the window
- along the gutters
- through the open doorway
- under a leaking roof

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

wet earth / waterlogged shoes / roof drumming / lights smeared

By afternoon, Across the glass, Within minutes, Under the rain,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. By afternoon, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. wet earth: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

mist > drizzle > downpour > deluge

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Wind

Show direction and force through what the wind changes.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

breezy	gusting	biting	restless
fierce	**erratic**	**howling**	**gale-force**

2 VERB VAULT

- whipped
- tugged
- rattled
- bent
- tore
- buffeted

3 PHRASE BANK

- through the narrow street
- across the exposed hill
- under the door
- around the chimney pots
- against their backs

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

bins rolling / coat snapping / trees bowing / sand stinging

From the north, Without warning, Across the rooftops, With each gust,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. From the north, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. bins rolling: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

breeze > gust > strong wind > gale

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Snow

Use the same weather to create beauty, difficulty or danger.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

powdery	heavy	blinding	fresh
deep	**silent**	**drifting**	**compact**

2 VERB VAULT

- settled
- swirled
- blanketed
- drifted
- crusted
- buried

3 PHRASE BANK

- across every surface
- in deepening drifts
- under a white silence
- against the dark coats
- through the headlamp beams

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

muffled steps / numb cheeks / bright glare / hidden kerb

Overnight, By morning, All around, As the snow thickened,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Overnight, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. muffled steps: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

flurry > steady snow > heavy fall > whiteout

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Heat

Make heat physical through light, air and body response.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

warm	stifling	scorching	parched
humid	**blazing**	**airless**	**searing**

2 VERB VAULT

- baked
- shimmered
- pressed
- scorched
- wilted
- glared

3 PHRASE BANK

- beneath the fierce sun
- through the airless room
- across cracked ground
- under a haze of heat
- against exposed skin

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

salt sweat / hot metal / dry throat / soft tar

By midday, In the open, Without shade, As the temperature rose,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. By midday, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. salt sweat: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

warm > hot > sweltering > searing

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Fog and mist

Limit sight and distort distance without making every scene frightening.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

thin	drifting	milky	dense
low-lying	**cold**	**shrouding**	**impenetrable**

2 VERB VAULT

- curled
- veiled
- rolled
- clung
- swallowed
- thinned

3 PHRASE BANK

- across the low fields
- around the streetlamps
- above the water
- through the trees
- within a few metres

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

damp hair / softened edges / muted traffic / drops on rails

At dawn, Ahead of them, Through the mist, As visibility narrowed,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At dawn, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. damp hair: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

haze > mist > fog > impenetrable white

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Thunder and lightning

Coordinate flash, delay and sound to create scale.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

electric	forked	blinding	distant
violent	**rolling**	**sudden**	**deafening**

2 VERB VAULT

- flashed
- split
- rumbled
- cracked
- illuminated
- shook

3 PHRASE BANK

- across the black sky
- before the thunder arrived
- over the open ground
- behind the clouds
- through the whole building

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

white after-image / windows vibrating / ozone smell / counted seconds

First came the flash, Across the horizon, Seconds later, Directly overhead,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. First came the flash, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. white after-image: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

distant > approaching > overhead > violent

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Sunrise and sunset

Use changing light and colour to mark time or mood.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

pale	amber	rose-gold	burnished
fading	**dusky**	**luminous**	**blood-red**

2 VERB VAULT

- brightened
- spread
- faded
- streaked
- softened
- sank

3 PHRASE BANK

- along the horizon
- across the underside of clouds
- behind the rooftops
- over the quiet fields
- into deepening blue

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

long shadows / cooling air / first birdsong / windows catching light

At first light, Along the horizon, As evening settled, Before darkness,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At first light, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. long shadows: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

faint > glowing > radiant > dramatic

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Sea and waves

Choose movement and force that match the conditions.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

glassy	rolling	restless	foaming
swollen	**choppy**	**powerful**	**tempestuous**

2 VERB VAULT

- surged
- heaved
- broke
- folded
- pounded
- receded

3 PHRASE BANK

- against the sea wall
- across the shingle
- beneath the dark horizon
- in long green lines
- around the black rocks

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

salt spray / pebbles dragged / deep roar / white foam

Far offshore, At the breakwater, Wave after wave, As the tide rose,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Far offshore, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [phrase].
2. salt spray: [character reaction] + [withheld information].
3. [specific detail] + [change in pace] + [consequence].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

calm > restless > rough > tempestuous

AUTHOR QUESTION

What should the reader feel, notice or understand? Which choices create that effect without over-writing?

Poetry

Choose the poetic decision you want to explore

Nature and landscape
Build a fresh image from precise nouns, verbs and sounds.

Emotion and mood
Choose an image that carries the feeling instead of naming it repeatedly.

Imagery
Choose a comparison because it sharpens meaning, not because it sounds impressive.

Sound and rhythm
Read choices aloud and keep only what strengthens meaning.

Movement
Let line length, verb choice and sound support the movement.

Poetic precision
Test the exact noun and verb before adding more description.

Poetry choices should create image, sound or meaning. Rhyme and figurative language remain optional.

Nature and landscape

Build a fresh image from precise nouns, verbs and sounds.

Rossmore School

- Sea
- Sky
- Trees and forest
- Mountains
- Rivers
- Weather
- Seasons
- Night

Sea

Explore the sea through movement, colour and sound.

POETRY / NATURE AND LANDSCAPE

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

tide	current	foam	horizon
depth	**swell**	**brine**	**undertow**

2 VERB VAULT

- folds
- breathes
- gnaws
- unfurls
- glitters
- withdraws

3 PHRASE BANK

- a sheet of hammered light
- the shore's restless visitor
- green shoulders of water
- salt on the wind
- a horizon without edges

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

shingle rattle / gull cry / cold spray / deep pulse

At the edge of land, Under the moon, Wave by wave, Far below,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At the edge of land, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

lullaby > conversation > argument > roar

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Sky

Use scale, light and change to create a distinct sky.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

canopy	vastness	cloudbank	afterglow
blue	**stormfront**	**constellation**	**dawn**

2 VERB VAULT

- opens
- darkens
- blushes
- broods
- clears
- burns

3 PHRASE BANK

- an ocean above us
- clouds like torn paper
- the day's final ember
- a roof without walls
- night pinned with light

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

high wind / swallow calls / warm light / first star

Above the roofs, At the day's edge, After rain, Between the clouds,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Above the roofs, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

pale > bright > dramatic > infinite

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Trees and forest

Give trees character through shape, age and movement.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

canopy	trunk	bough	root
grove	**sapling**	**bark**	**understorey**

2 VERB VAULT

- leans
- knits
- whispers
- clutches
- sheds
- reaches

3 PHRASE BANK

- roots writing through soil
- a roof stitched from leaves
- trunks holding up the dusk
- branches combing the wind
- a green cathedral

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

leaf hiss / sap scent / rough bark / filtered light

Beneath the leaves, After the storm, At the forest edge, Deep in the grove,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Beneath the leaves, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

young > sheltering > ancient > wild

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Mountains

Create scale and distance without relying on 'big'.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

summit	ridge	crag	scree
peak	**valley**	**snowline**	**precipice**

2 VERB VAULT

- rises
- guards
- cuts
- shoulders
- pierces
- endures

3 PHRASE BANK

- stone against the sky
- a spine beneath snow
- clouds caught on the summit
- the earth standing upright
- valleys folded below

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

thin air / eagle cry / loose stone / wind scrape

Beyond the valley, Above the cloud, From the summit, Under the ridge,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Beyond the valley, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

distant > majestic > formidable > timeless

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Rivers

Follow the river's changing pace and path.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

source	current	channel	meander
torrent	**bank**	**confluence**	**estuary**

2 VERB VAULT

- threads
- rushes
- carves
- wanders
- spills
- widens

3 PHRASE BANK

- a silver road downhill
- water worrying the stone
- a ribbon through fields
- rain gathered into purpose
- the valley's moving mirror

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

reed whisper / stone clatter / cold water / mud scent

From the spring, Around the bend, After the rain, Towards the sea,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. From the spring, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

trickle > stream > current > torrent

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Weather

Turn weather into an active presence with one sustained idea.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

drizzle	gust	frost	downpour
heatwave	**mist**	**thunder**	**hail**

2 VERB VAULT

- taps
- hammers
- smothers
- polishes
- bites
- prowls

3 PHRASE BANK

- rain sewing sky to street
- frost's silver handwriting
- wind searching every gap
- thunder rolling furniture upstairs
- mist erasing the distance

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

roof rhythm / cold cheeks / ozone / wet wool

By morning, Against the glass, Across the town, Without warning,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. By morning, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

touch > visitor > opponent > ruler

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Seasons

Use change, pattern and contrast to represent a season.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

bud	blossom	harvest	frost
thaw	**drought**	**leaf-fall**	**solstice**

2 VERB VAULT

- returns
- ripens
- fades
- hardens
- awakens
- withdraws

3 PHRASE BANK

- spring loosening the ground
- summer holding the light
- autumn spending its gold
- winter closing the gates
- the year turning its key

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

new shoots / dry grass / apple scent / ice crust

When spring returns, At summer's height, By late autumn, Through winter,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. When spring returns, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

arrival > growth > release > rest

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Night

Use darkness, light and quiet to create a focused image.

POETRY / NATURE AND LANDSCAPE

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

darkness	moon	shadow	constellation
midnight	**silhouette**	**glimmer**	**stillness**

2 VERB VAULT

- settles
- deepens
- watches
- conceals
- glows
- listens

3 PHRASE BANK

- night buttoning the streets
- the moon's pale coin
- windows afloat in darkness
- shadows pooling at walls
- stars pricking the silence

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

fox bark / lamp hum / cool air / distant train

After the last light, At midnight, Under the moon, While the town slept,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. After the last light, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

rest > mystery > loneliness > threat

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Emotion and mood

Choose an image that carries the feeling instead of naming it repeatedly.

Rossmore School

Joy

Loss

Fear

Hope

Anger

Loneliness

Wonder

Calm

Joy

Create joy through energy, warmth or release.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

spark	sunlight	laughter	lift
brightness	**freedom**	**celebration**	**warmth**

2 VERB VAULT

- bursts
- rises
- dances
- spills
- rings
- glows

3 PHRASE BANK

- a window flung open
- sunlight under the skin
- laughter skipping ahead
- a pocket full of summer
- the body remembering flight

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

quick breath / warm face / music / open space

Today, All at once, Inside me, When the news came,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Today, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

contentment > delight > elation > euphoria

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Loss

Represent absence through what remains, stops or changes.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

absence	echo	gap	memory
silence	**keepsake**	**distance**	**farewell**

2 VERB VAULT

- fades
- lingers
- empties
- repeats
- reaches
- aches

3 PHRASE BANK

- a chair holding its silence
- the shape left in a room
- a name the walls remember
- an echo without an answer
- time moving without permission

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

unread message / cold cup / folded coat / quiet step

Since then, In the empty room, I still, Where you stood,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Since then, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

missing > absence > grief > desolation

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Fear

Create fear through image, rhythm and narrowed attention.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

shadow	warning	edge	heartbeat
dark	**breath**	**trap**	**silence**

2 VERB VAULT

- closes
- stalks
- tightens
- waits
- scratches
- swallows

3 PHRASE BANK

- a lock turning inside me
- the dark learning my name
- footsteps borrowing my pace
- breath trapped behind ribs
- a shadow with patience

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

pulse / cold skin / small sound / closed door

Behind me, In the pause, Do not turn, Closer now,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Behind me, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

unease > dread > terror > panic

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Hope

Show possibility through light, growth or movement.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

glimmer	seed	dawn	opening
promise	**path**	**return**	**breath**

2 VERB VAULT

- rises
- roots
- brightens
- persists
- reaches
- begins

3 PHRASE BANK

- a green shoot through concrete
- the first line of morning
- a door left unlocked
- one star through cloud
- tomorrow gathering colour

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

birdsong / new leaf / warm horizon / steady hand

Even here, After the rain, Still, At first light,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Even here, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

possibility > belief > confidence > renewal

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Anger

Control heat, pressure and rhythm to shape anger.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

spark	flame	pressure	storm
fist	**edge**	**heat**	**eruption**

2 VERB VAULT

- burns
- strikes
- boils
- splinters
- surges
- erupts

3 PHRASE BANK

- a match behind the teeth
- heat climbing the walls
- thunder under the skin
- words sharpened to points
- a lid beginning to lift

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

hard consonants / short lines / red image / repeated beat

Again, Inside me, Enough, Before I speak,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Again, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

irritation > anger > rage > fury

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Loneliness

Use distance, scale and silence to express isolation.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

distance	island	window	silence
empty	**edge**	**single**	**unseen**

2 VERB VAULT

- drifts
- waits
- echoes
- withdraws
- shrinks
- watches

3 PHRASE BANK

- one light in a tower
- an island in a crowded room
- a voice returned unopened
- the last chair at the edge
- snow without footprints

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

clock tick / empty corridor / dim window / unanswered call

Among everyone, At the window, After they leave, No one sees,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Among everyone, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

alone > isolated > forgotten > erased

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Wonder

Use discovery, scale and precise surprise.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

marvel	vastness	pattern	glow
discovery	**mystery**	**intricacy**	**awe**

2 VERB VAULT

- unfolds
- gleams
- reveals
- opens
- shimmers
- astonishes

3 PHRASE BANK

- a universe in one drop
- light building a staircase
- the sky opening its archive
- a map inside a leaf
- stars beyond counting

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

held breath / wide gaze / tiny detail / immense distance

Look closely, Above us, For the first time, Hidden inside,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Look closely, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

curiosity > amazement > wonder > awe

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Calm

Create calm through space, repetition and gentle sound.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

stillness	balance	drift	hush
breath	**rest**	**quiet**	**ease**

2 VERB VAULT

- settles
- floats
- softens
- rests
- slows
- smooths

3 PHRASE BANK

- water holding the sky
- breath finding its rhythm
- the day lowering its voice
- clouds with nowhere to hurry
- silence with room inside

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

soft vowel / slow line / distant bird / warm air

For a while, Beside the water, Slowly, Nothing asks,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. For a while, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

quiet > restful > serene > complete stillness

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Imagery

Choose a comparison because it sharpens meaning, not because it sounds impressive.

Rossmore School

- Simile
- Metaphor
- Personification
- Symbolic image
- Colour imagery
- Light and dark

Simile

Compare two things that share one clear quality.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

like	as though	as if	resembled
echoed	**mirrored**	**suggested**	**seemed**

2 VERB VAULT

- stretched
- clung
- flared
- trembled
- coiled
- scattered

3 PHRASE BANK

- like ink in water
- as though the sky had cracked
- like a held breath
- as if stitched from smoke
- like coins across glass

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

shape / movement / sound / texture

The light was like, It moved as though, As ___ as, The sound resembled,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. The light was like, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

familiar > precise > unexpected > transformative

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Metaphor

State one controlled comparison and sustain its meaning.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

is	became	was	turned into
made a	**formed a**	**held a**	**carried a**

2 VERB VAULT

- consumed
- anchored
- flooded
- caged
- split
- illuminated

3 PHRASE BANK

- the city was a furnace
- her voice was an anchor
- time became thick glass
- the road was a question
- silence was a locked room

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

shared quality / consistent image / one semantic field / controlled extension

The room was, Inside him, By evening, Between them,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. The room was, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

simple > clear > sustained > layered

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Personification

Give a non-human thing one purposeful human action.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

watchful	patient	jealous	reluctant
hungry	**sleepy**	**stubborn**	**curious**

2 VERB VAULT

- watches
- refuses
- clutches
- beckons
- sulks
- celebrates

3 PHRASE BANK

- the wind searched the alley
- morning knocked at the blinds
- the path invited us on
- winter gripped the garden
- the old house remembered

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

human intention / single action / mood match / no mixed image

Outside, All night, By dawn, Ahead of us,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Outside, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

gentle > playful > unsettling > threatening

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Symbolic image

Use a concrete image that can carry a wider idea.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

key	bridge	seed	wall
mirror	**cage**	**flame**	**road**

2 VERB VAULT

- opens
- connects
- roots
- divides
- reflects
- confines

3 PHRASE BANK

- a key without a lock
- a bridge into morning
- a seed under frozen soil
- a mirror turned away
- a flame passed hand to hand

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

repeat lightly / allow inference / fit theme / avoid explaining everything

Throughout the poem, At the turning point, In the final line, Again,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Throughout the poem, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

object > pattern > motif > symbol

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Colour imagery

Use colour to shape atmosphere, focus or contrast.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

amber	scarlet	indigo	silver
ash-grey	**ivory**	**copper**	**emerald**

2 VERB VAULT

- bleeds
- pools
- stains
- fades
- glows
- flashes

3 PHRASE BANK

- a bruise of purple cloud
- amber trapped in glass
- silver along the roofs
- green returning to branches
- red against the snow

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

light source / material / season / emotional association

At sunset, Against the grey, Under the lamp, In one bright corner,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At sunset, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

pale > rich > vivid > startling

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Light and dark

Control contrast, visibility and what the image suggests.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

glimmer	radiance	shadow	gloom
flare	**dusk**	**beam**	**blackness**

2 VERB VAULT

- flickers
- cuts
- spills
- dims
- reveals
- conceals

3 PHRASE BANK

- light under the door
- darkness between the stars
- a beam dividing the room
- shadows gathering in corners
- morning rinsing the walls

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

source / direction / edge / change

From the window, At dusk, When the light shifted, Beyond the beam,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. From the window, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

dim > glowing > brilliant > blinding

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Sound and rhythm

Read choices aloud and keep only what strengthens meaning.

Rossmore School

- Onomatopoeia
- Alliteration
- Repetition
- Rhyme choices
- Soft sounds
- Harsh sounds

Onomatopoeia

Choose sound words that fit the real sound and tone.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

click	crackle	hiss	thud
whirr	**splash**	**clatter**	**murmur**

2 VERB VAULT

- ticks
- cracks
- buzzes
- rattles
- pops
- rumbles

3 PHRASE BANK

- click of the latch
- hiss of tyres
- thud in the hall
- crackle underfoot
- whirr behind the wall

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

hard impact / soft continuous sound / mechanical sound / water sound

Click, Underfoot, From the machine, All night,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Click, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

whisper > rustle > clatter > crash

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Alliteration

Repeat a sound sparingly to reinforce the image or pace.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

soft s	hard k	breathy h	rolling r
bright b	**murmuring m**	**light l**	**sharp t**

2 VERB VAULT

- slides
- cuts
- hurries
- rolls
- bursts
- taps

3 PHRASE BANK

- silver sea slipping
- cracked concrete corners
- hungry hills huddled
- river running restless
- tiny taps of rain

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

sound matches mood / two or three key words / natural phrasing / read aloud

Softly, Across the, Under the, Through the,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Softly, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

subtle > noticeable > strong > overloaded

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Repetition

Repeat a word or structure to build meaning or emphasis.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

again	still	never	remember
because	**here**	**gone**	**we**

2 VERB VAULT

- returns
- insists
- echoes
- builds
- changes
- breaks

3 PHRASE BANK

- again at the window
- still we wait
- because the road continues
- remember the first light
- gone from every room

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

anaphora / refrain / single key word / changed final repetition

Again, I remember, We are, Still,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Again, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

echo > pattern > insistence > crescendo

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Rhyme choices

Use rhyme only when it supports tone and natural wording.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

full rhyme	half rhyme	internal rhyme	rhyme pair
refrain	**no rhyme**	**echo sound**	**slant rhyme**

2 VERB VAULT

- links
- echoes
- closes
- surprises
- lightens
- unsettles

3 PHRASE BANK

- night and light
- stone and alone
- rain within a line
- an expected rhyme withheld
- a final sound returning

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

avoid forced word order / check meaning / read aloud / vary pattern

At the line end, Within the line, In the refrain, Instead of rhyming,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At the line end, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

playful > musical > unsettling > deliberately unrhymed

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Soft sounds

Use sound patterns that slow or soothe the voice.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

s	sh	m	n
l	**f**	**v**	**long vowels**

2 VERB VAULT

- murmurs
- slides
- floats
- softens
- lingers
- flows

3 PHRASE BANK

- slow silver water
- hush of evening
- leaves moving lightly
- moon over meadow
- a low and level voice

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

open vowels / gentle consonants / long line / light stress

Slowly, In the hush, Along the water, While evening,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Slowly, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

gentle > soothing > dreamlike > hushed

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Harsh sounds

Use hard sounds to sharpen pace, conflict or impact.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

k	t	g	d
cr	**cl**	**short vowels**	**stops**

2 VERB VAULT

- cracks
- cuts
- clatters
- grinds
- strikes
- snaps

3 PHRASE BANK

- brick breaking
- clocks cutting silence
- grit against glass
- boots striking stone
- cracked and crooked

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

consonant cluster / short line / strong stress / abrupt ending

Crack, Against the wall, Under each step, Suddenly,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Crack, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

firm > abrupt > aggressive > violent

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Movement

Let line length, verb choice and sound support the movement.

Rossmore School

- Drifting
- Rushing
- Falling
- Rising
- Turning
- Stillness

Drifting

Create gentle, unforced movement with space and soft rhythm.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

weightless	wandering	loose	slow
unanchored	**floating**	**idle**	**soft**

2 VERB VAULT

- drifts
- floats
- glides
- wanders
- settles
- circles

3 PHRASE BANK

- without a destination
- on the smallest current
- between light and shadow
- across the open blue
- until the motion fades

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

feather / cloud / leaf / smoke

Slowly, Above us, On the breeze, Without hurry,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Slowly, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

hover > drift > glide > vanish

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Rushing

Create speed through strong verbs, shorter units and sound.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

rapid	urgent	headlong	surging
breathless	**wild**	**unstoppable**	**blurred**

2 VERB VAULT

- races
- hurtles
- pours
- charges
- tears
- bursts

3 PHRASE BANK

- past every warning
- through the narrowing gap
- with the force of floodwater
- before thought can follow
- towards the edge

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

short line / hard beat / repeated verb / compressed image

Now, Faster, Through the, No time,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Now, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

quick > racing > frantic > unstoppable

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Falling

Shape descent through pace, space and changing control.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

loose	weightless	spinning	sudden
downward	**uncontrolled**	**silent**	**endless**

2 VERB VAULT

- drops
- tumbles
- plunges
- spirals
- sinks
- collapses

3 PHRASE BANK

- through layers of air
- away from the branch
- into the waiting dark
- past the final ledge
- without finding ground

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

leaf / rain / stone / feather

Down, For a moment, Below, Until,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Down, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

settle > drop > tumble > plunge

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Rising

Create lift, growth or increasing intensity.

POETRY / MOVEMENT

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

upward	buoyant	gathering	ascending
brightening	**expanding**	**weightless**	**steady**

2 VERB VAULT

- rises
- climbs
- swells
- lifts
- grows
- surges

3 PHRASE BANK

- from the cold ground
- above the rooftops
- towards first light
- through layers of cloud
- until it fills the room

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

smoke / sun / song / hope

From below, Little by little, Above us, By morning,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. From below, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

lift > climb > soar > surge

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Turning

Use circular or changing movement to signal transition.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

circling	spiralling	pivoting	returning
reversing	**curved**	**restless**	**changing**

2 VERB VAULT

- turns
- wheels
- spirals
- swivels
- loops
- recoils

3 PHRASE BANK

- back towards the beginning
- around an unseen centre
- with the change of wind
- through a complete circle
- away from the old path

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

wheel / season / bird / tide

Around, At the bend, When the wind changed, Again,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Around, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

bend > turn > spiral > reversal

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Stillness

Make lack of movement deliberate and meaningful.

POETRY / MOVEMENT

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

motionless	balanced	suspended	fixed
silent	**waiting**	**settled**	**held**

2 VERB VAULT

- rests
- waits
- holds
- pauses
- freezes
- remains

3 PHRASE BANK

- between one breath and the next
- without disturbing the surface
- as if time had stopped
- under the listening sky
- at the centre of noise

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

held breath / flat water / unmoved leaf / stopped clock

For a moment, Nothing moved, At the centre, Afterwards,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. For a moment, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

pause > calm > suspense > absolute stillness

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Poetic precision

Test the exact noun and verb before adding more description.

Rossmore School

- Powerful nouns
- Precise verbs
- Unexpected pairings
- Line openings
- Single-word impact
- Try it aloud

Powerful nouns

Choose a noun that carries detail before adding modifiers.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

ember	torrent	fracture	silhouette
harbour	**echo**	**threshold**	**constellation**

2 VERB VAULT

- anchors
- frames
- focuses
- suggests
- compresses
- reveals

3 PHRASE BANK

- one exact object
- a concrete image
- a noun with associations
- the name of the part
- a specific natural feature

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

replace thing / replace place / name material / name shape

At the centre is, I notice, Only the, Beyond the,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At the centre is, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

general > specific > evocative > symbolic

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Precise verbs

Let the verb carry manner, speed and effect.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

glides	lurches	threads	scours
flickers	**fractures**	**coils**	**unfurls**

2 VERB VAULT

- glides
- lurches
- threads
- scours
- flickers
- fractures

3 PHRASE BANK

- verb before adverb
- movement with direction
- action with consequence
- sound within action
- change over time

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

remove 'went' / remove 'did' / test tense / read rhythm

It, Across the, Suddenly, By morning,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. It, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

moves > travels > glides > slices

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Unexpected pairings

Join words that create a fresh but understandable image.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

restless stone	patient rain	bruised light	paper sky
hungry silence	**glass morning**	**rusted sunset**	**tender thunder**

2 VERB VAULT

- pairs
- collides
- reframes
- surprises
- clarifies
- intensifies

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

check clarity / avoid random pairing / keep one image / read aloud

A ___ ___, The ___ ___, Under ___ ___, Through ___ ___,

3 PHRASE BANK

- adjective from another sense
- human quality with object
- material with weather
- emotion with colour
- texture with sound

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. A ___ ___, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

familiar > fresh > surprising > confusing

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Line openings

Begin with a word or phrase that controls focus and pace.

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

beneath	because	still	listen
after	**inside**	**once**	**perhaps**

2 VERB VAULT

- positions
- questions
- delays
- emphasises
- interrupts
- returns

3 PHRASE BANK

- prepositional opening
- single-word opening
- subordinate clause
- direct address
- repeated opening

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

punctuation choice / line break / stress pattern / reader expectation

Beneath, Because, Listen, After,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Beneath, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

quiet > curious > urgent > defiant

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Single-word impact

Use an isolated word only when its placement adds meaning.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

Gone	Wait	Home	Enough
Again	**Breathe**	**Listen**	**Still**

2 VERB VAULT

- halts
- echoes
- turns
- answers
- interrupts
- concludes

3 PHRASE BANK

- one word after a long line
- a repeated command
- a final answer
- a turning point
- a word given white space

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

capital letter / full stop / line break / surrounding silence

At the turn, After the list, At the end, Between sections,

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. At the turn, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

notice > emphasis > shock > resolution

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Try it aloud

Use your voice to test rhythm, breath and sound.

Rossmore School

1 QUICK CHOICE

Accessible choices come first. Stretch choices are bold.

pace	stress	pause	beat
breath	**echo**	**volume**	**silence**

2 VERB VAULT

- read
- tap
- pause
- repeat
- shorten
- reorder

3 PHRASE BANK

- where the breath naturally falls
- which sound carries furthest
- where the rhythm stumbles
- which word deserves stress
- whether the ending lands

4 DETAILS AND OPENERS

mark breaths / tap beats / record once / listen back

Read it once, Now slower, Stress the, Pause after,

MAKE IT YOURS

Choose one phrase. Replace one word, add one original detail or change the structure.

5 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Read it once, [precise noun] + [strong verb] + [image].
2. [detail] becomes / behaves like [comparison].
3. [short line] + [longer line that develops the image].

Do not copy a finished model. Use the frame to test your own choices.

6 SHADE-O-METER

smooth > purposeful > musical > memorable

AUTHOR QUESTION

Which choice creates the strongest image or sound? Try it aloud, then remove anything that does not earn its place.

Persuasion

Match language strength to audience, purpose and evidence.

Rossmore School

Open a position
State a clear viewpoint without pretending it is already proved.

Address the reader
Help the audience picture why the issue matters to them.

Add evidence and reasons
Link a claim to relevant evidence or reasoning.

Emphasise
Signal importance without making every point sound equally urgent.

Contrast
Show a meaningful difference between choices or outcomes.

Counterargument
Acknowledge another view fairly before responding.

Create urgency
Explain why delay matters rather than simply demanding speed.

Conclude and call to action
Gather the strongest reason and make a realistic request.

Open a position

State a clear viewpoint without pretending it is already proved.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

I believe that...	There are strong reasons to...	This proposal would...
Our community should consider...	**A fairer approach would be...**	**The central issue is...**

2 PRECISION BANK

position • proposal • priority • benefit • responsibility • viewpoint

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

neutral > assertive > forceful

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. I believe ___ because ___.
2. The central issue is ___, which ___.
3. For ___, the strongest option is ___.

5 COMPARE

A I think this is good.

B This proposal would improve ___ by ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Address the reader

Help the audience picture why the issue matters to them.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

Imagine...	Consider for a moment...	You may have noticed...
As members of our community...	**Ask yourself whether...**	**For pupils and families...**

2 PRECISION BANK

audience • community • experience • impact • shared • directly

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

inviting > direct > challenging

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Imagine ___ without ___.
2. As ___, you deserve ___.
3. Ask yourself whether ___ is acceptable.

5 COMPARE

A You should care.

B This affects you when ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Add evidence and reasons

Link a claim to relevant evidence or reasoning.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

One significant reason is...	Evidence from ___ suggests...	For example...
This matters because...	**A further benefit would be...**	**The evidence indicates...**

2 PRECISION BANK

evidence • reason • example • outcome • demonstrates • indicates

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

possible > supported > compelling

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. The evidence from ___ indicates ___.
2. For example, ___, which shows ___.
3. This matters because ___.

5 COMPARE

A Everyone knows...

B The survey of ___ found ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Emphasise

Signal importance without making every point sound equally urgent.

1 CORE PHRASES

Crucially...	Above all...	Of particular importance is...
The strongest reason is...	**We must recognise...**	**It is essential that...**

2 PRECISION BANK

priority • essential • significant • consequence • urgent • central

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

important > significant > essential

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Crucially, ___ affects ___.
2. Of particular importance is ___.
3. The strongest reason concerns ___.

5 COMPARE

A This is very important.

B This is essential because ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Contrast

Show a meaningful difference between choices or outcomes.

1 CORE PHRASES

In contrast...	By comparison...	On the other hand...
Whereas...	**However...**	**Unlike the current system...**

2 PRECISION BANK

contrast • whereas • alternative • difference • outcome • compared

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

difference > clear contrast > stark contrast

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Whereas ___, ___.
2. The current ___; by comparison, ___.
3. Unlike ___, this option ___.

5 COMPARE

A Option A is different.

B Whereas A ___, B ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Counterargument

Acknowledge another view fairly before responding.

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1 CORE PHRASES

Some may argue that...	Admittedly...	It is true that...
While this concern is understandable...	**This view, however, overlooks...**	**Although ___ may...**

2 PRECISION BANK

counterargument • concern • valid • overlooks • nevertheless • response

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

acknowledge > challenge > rebut

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Some may argue ___; however, ___.
2. While ___ is a valid concern, ___.
3. Admittedly, ___, yet ___.

5 COMPARE

A Others are wrong.

B Some may argue ___, but this overlooks ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Create urgency

Explain why delay matters rather than simply demanding speed.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

Without timely action...	If this continues...	The longer we wait...
Action is needed before...	**Unless the issue is addressed...**	**There is a limited opportunity to...**

2 PRECISION BANK

delay • deadline • risk • immediate • prevent • opportunity

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

timely > urgent > immediate

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Without action by ___, ___.
2. The longer ___, the greater ___.
3. Unless ___, there is a risk that ___.

5 COMPARE

A Do it now!

B Action is needed now because ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Conclude and call to action

Gather the strongest reason and make a realistic request.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

For these reasons...	It is therefore vital that...	I urge you to...
The most responsible next step is...	**Please consider...**	**Together, we can...**

2 PRECISION BANK

recommend • request • action • next step • responsible • commit

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

request > recommendation > clear call

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. For these reasons, I urge ___.
2. The most responsible next step is ___.
3. Please commit to ___ by ___.

5 COMPARE

A Please help.

B Please ___ so that ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Formal letter

Use courteous, precise language suited to the recipient.

Opening
Address the recipient correctly and establish a professional tone.

State purpose
Explain the reason for writing early and directly.

Complaint and concern
Describe the problem calmly, accurately and specifically.

Explain impact
Show the real consequence for people, learning or safety.

Request action
Ask for a specific, realistic response.

Persuade
Give reasons that matter to the recipient and the wider audience.

Formal linking
Connect ideas so the letter reads as a reasoned case.

Close
End courteously and make the expected next step clear.

Opening

Address the recipient correctly and establish a professional tone.

1 CORE PHRASES

Dear Sir or Madam,	Dear Headteacher,	Dear Councillor Patel,
I am writing regarding...	**I am writing in connection with...**	**Thank you for your recent...**

2 PRECISION BANK

recipient • regarding • connection • correspondence • matter • recent

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

too casual > suitable > highly formal

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Dear ___,
2. I am writing regarding ___.
3. Thank you for your letter dated ___.

5 COMPARE

A Hi there,

B Dear Councillor Patel,

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

State purpose

Explain the reason for writing early and directly.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

The purpose of this letter is to...	I wish to draw your attention to...	I am writing to request...
I would like to raise...	**This letter concerns...**	**I am contacting you on behalf of...**

2 PRECISION BANK

purpose • request • concern • proposal • attention • behalf

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

general > clear > precise

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. The purpose of this letter is to ___.
2. I wish to draw your attention to ___.
3. On behalf of ___, I am writing to ___.

5 COMPARE

A I am writing about something.

B I am writing to request ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Complaint and concern

Describe the problem calmly, accurately and specifically.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

I was disappointed to discover...	Of particular concern is...	Unfortunately...
I am concerned that...	**The main difficulty has been...**	**This does not meet...**

2 PRECISION BANK

concern • difficulty • standard • failure • disruption • unacceptable

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

concerned > seriously concerned > formally dissatisfied

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. I am concerned that ___ because ___.
2. Of particular concern is ___.
3. Unfortunately, ___ has resulted in ___.

5 COMPARE

A This is awful.

B This has caused ___ and does not meet ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Explain impact

Show the real consequence for people, learning or safety.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

As a result...	This has caused...	Consequently...
The effect on ___ has been...	**This has meant that...**	**A further consequence is...**

2 PRECISION BANK

impact • consequence • disruption • access • wellbeing • safety

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

minor > significant > serious

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. As a result, ___ cannot ___.
2. This has caused ___ for ___.
3. A further consequence is ___.

5 COMPARE

A It is annoying.

B This has disrupted ___ by ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Request action

Ask for a specific, realistic response.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

I would be grateful if...	I respectfully request that...	I would therefore appreciate...
Please could you confirm...	**I ask that you consider...**	**A suitable resolution would be...**

2 PRECISION BANK

request • resolve • confirm • review • arrange • provide

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

polite > formal > firm

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. I would be grateful if you could ___.
2. Please confirm by ___ whether ___.
3. A suitable resolution would be ___.

5 COMPARE

A Sort this out.

B I respectfully request that ___ be reviewed.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Persuade

Give reasons that matter to the recipient and the wider audience.

1 CORE PHRASES

I strongly believe...	It would be beneficial to...	I urge you to consider...
This would enable...	**The proposal offers...**	**A key advantage is...**

2 PRECISION BANK

beneficial • enable • advantage • proposal • improve • support

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

suggest > recommend > urge

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. This would benefit ___ by ___.
2. I urge you to consider ___ because ___.
3. A key advantage is ___.

5 COMPARE

A This is better.

B This would improve ___ because ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Formal linking

Connect ideas so the letter reads as a reasoned case.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

Furthermore...	In addition...	Nevertheless...
Consequently...	**For this reason...**	**With regard to...**

2 PRECISION BANK

furthermore • consequently • nevertheless • regarding • therefore • addition

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

add > contrast > result

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Furthermore, ___.
2. Nevertheless, it is important to ___.
3. Consequently, ___ has ___.

5 COMPARE

A And another thing...

B Furthermore, ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Close

End courteously and make the expected next step clear.

1 CORE PHRASES

I trust that...	I look forward to your response...	Thank you for considering...
I would welcome the opportunity to...	**Please respond by...**	**Yours faithfully / Yours sincerely**

2 PRECISION BANK

response • consideration • resolution • opportunity • faithfully • sincerely

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

courteous > formal > firm

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. I look forward to your response by ___.
2. Thank you for considering ___.
3. Yours ___,

5 COMPARE

A Write back soon.

B I look forward to your response.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Newspaper report

Report clearly, attribute information and distinguish fact from claim.

Headline language
Summarise the central event with a short, accurate headline.

Opening lead
Cover the most important who, what, where and when.

Report events
Present events in a clear order and show cause where known.

Witness language
Attribute observations to the person who made them.

Officials
Use accurate reporting verbs for verified statements.

Uncertainty
Show clearly when information has not been verified.

Cause and effect
Connect events only when the evidence supports the link.

Time and location
Orient the reader precisely as the report moves.

Headline language

Summarise the central event with a short, accurate headline.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

Council approves new park	Storm closes coastal road	Rare bird spotted locally
Pupils launch food appeal	**Museum reopens after repairs**	**Residents welcome safer crossing**

2 PRECISION BANK

approves • closes • launches • reopens • warns • investigates

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

informative > engaging > dramatic but accurate

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. ___ opens after ___.
2. ___ warns residents about ___.
3. ___ launches ___.

5 COMPARE

A Chaos strikes town!

B Storm closes coastal road

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Opening lead

Cover the most important who, what, where and when.

1 CORE PHRASES

Earlier today...	A major ___ took place...	Residents were ___ after...
Emergency teams attended...	**A new ___ opened in...**	**Hundreds gathered at...**

2 PRECISION BANK

occurred • attended • opened • announced • affected • gathered

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

basic facts > key impact > urgent lead

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Earlier today, ___ occurred at ___.
2. Residents in ___ were ___ after ___.
3. A new ___ opened on ___.

5 COMPARE

A Something happened today.

B Earlier today, ___ at ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Report events

Present events in a clear order and show cause where known.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

The incident began when...	Shortly afterwards...	This was followed by...
The event resulted in...	**Teams then...**	**By late afternoon...**

2 PRECISION BANK

occurred • unfolded • resulted • followed • prompted • led

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

sequence > cause > confirmed outcome

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. The incident began when ___.
2. This prompted ___ to ___.
3. By ___, ___.

5 COMPARE

A Then lots happened.

B Shortly afterwards, ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Witness language

Attribute observations to the person who made them.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

According to witnesses...	One resident explained...	An eyewitness reported...
A pupil at the scene said...	**Several people described...**	**One shopkeeper recalled...**

2 PRECISION BANK

witness • reported • recalled • described • observed • explained

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

reported > described > confirmed by several witnesses

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. According to ___, ___.
2. One witness described ___.
3. Several people reported seeing ___.

5 COMPARE

A Everyone saw it.

B According to three witnesses, ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Officials

Use accurate reporting verbs for verified statements.

1 CORE PHRASES

Police confirmed...	The council announced...	A spokesperson stated...
Officials explained...	**Fire crews warned...**	**The headteacher said...**

2 PRECISION BANK

confirmed • stated • announced • explained • warned • advised

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

said > stated > confirmed

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. A spokesperson confirmed that ___.
2. Officials explained that ___.
3. The council announced plans to ___.

5 COMPARE

A They said it happened.

B Police confirmed that ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Uncertainty

Show clearly when information has not been verified.

1 CORE PHRASES

It is believed that...	Reports suggest...	The cause has not yet been confirmed...
One witness claimed...	**The item is thought to be...**	**Allegedly...**

2 PRECISION BANK

claimed • reported • believed • alleged • unconfirmed • suggested

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

claim > report > confirmation

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. It is believed that ___, although ___.
2. One witness claimed ___; this has not been confirmed.
3. The cause remains ___.

5 COMPARE

A It definitely happened.

B Reports suggest ___, but officials have not confirmed this.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

MEANING MATTERS

Claimed means someone says it is true. Confirmed means reliable evidence supports it. Alleged signals an accusation that has not been proved.

Cause and effect

Connect events only when the evidence supports the link.

1 CORE PHRASES

As a result...	Consequently...	Following the incident...
Due to...	**This prompted...**	**The closure led to...**

2 PRECISION BANK

result • consequence • prompted • caused • due • following

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

sequence > likely link > confirmed cause

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Following ___, ___.
2. This prompted ___ to ___.
3. Due to ___, ___.

5 COMPARE

A After this, so it caused it.

B Officials said ___ caused ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Time and location

Orient the reader precisely as the report moves.

1 CORE PHRASES

Shortly after...	Meanwhile...	At the scene...
Nearby...	**Later that evening...**	**In the town centre...**

2 PRECISION BANK

meanwhile • nearby • shortly • later • scene • location

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

general > specific > precise

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Shortly after ___, ___.
2. Meanwhile, at ___, ___.
3. Later that evening, ___.

5 COMPARE

A Then, over there...

B Later that evening, near ___, ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Non-chronological report

Classify, describe and explain with precise factual language.

Classify and introduce
Place the subject in a clear group and define its main identity.

Describe features
Name exact parts, materials or characteristics.

Habitat and location
Describe where the subject lives or occurs and under what conditions.

Behaviour and function
Explain what a feature does or how the subject behaves.

Compare
Use the same point of comparison for both subjects.

Quantify and qualify
Make factual claims precise without overclaiming.

Cohesion
Link information without repeating the subject's full name.

Classify and introduce

Place the subject in a clear group and define its main identity.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

is a type of...	belongs to the group...	is characterised by...
can be identified by...	**is one of several...**	**is classified as...**

2 PRECISION BANK

species • category • group • classified • identified • characterised

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

broad > specific > scientific

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. A ___ is a type of ___.
2. It belongs to ___ and can be identified by ___.
3. This species is characterised by ___.

5 COMPARE

A It is an animal.

B It is a nocturnal mammal in the ___ family.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Describe features

Name exact parts, materials or characteristics.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

consists of...	is covered with...	possesses...
typically has...	**features...**	**is distinguished by...**

2 PRECISION BANK

feature • structure • surface • possesses • layer • adaptation

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

general > detailed > technical

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Its ___ consists of ___.
2. The surface is covered with ___.
3. It is distinguished by ___.

5 COMPARE

A It has a thing on it.

B Its outer layer consists of ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Habitat and location

Describe where the subject lives or occurs and under what conditions.

1 CORE PHRASES

is commonly found...	inhabits...	thrives in...
is distributed across...	**prefers conditions where...**	**is native to...**

2 PRECISION BANK

habitat • distribution • native • conditions • region • environment

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

found > common > widespread

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. It inhabits ___ where ___.
2. This species is distributed across ___.
3. It thrives in conditions that ___.

5 COMPARE

A It lives in forests.

B It inhabits damp woodland across ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Behaviour and function

Explain what a feature does or how the subject behaves.

NON-CHRONOLOGICAL REPORT

1 CORE PHRASES

uses ___ to...	enables the animal to...	allows ___ to...
protects against...	**responds by...**	**functions as...**

2 PRECISION BANK

function • behaviour • enables • protects • responds • detects

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

does > helps > enables

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. The ___ enables it to ___.
2. It responds to ___ by ___.
3. This feature functions as ___.

5 COMPARE

A It helps it survive.

B The membrane enables it to ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Compare

Use the same point of comparison for both subjects.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

unlike...	similarly...	whereas...
in comparison...	**compared with...**	**both species...**

2 PRECISION BANK

similarity • difference • whereas • compared • both • unlike

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

different > clear difference > key distinction

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Whereas ___, ___.
2. Both ___ and ___; however, ___.
3. Compared with ___, ___.

5 COMPARE

A They are different.

B Whereas A ___, B ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Quantify and qualify

Make factual claims precise without overclaiming.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

approximately...	generally...	typically...
in most cases...	**can...**	**may reach...**

2 PRECISION BANK

approximately • typically • average • range • majority • varies

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

possible > typical > certain

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. It typically reaches ___.
2. In most cases, ___.
3. The size varies from ___ to ___.

5 COMPARE

A It is always huge.

B Adults may reach approximately ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Cohesion

Link information without repeating the subject's full name.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

this species...	these features...	such adaptations...
another characteristic...	**this process...**	**the animal...**

2 PRECISION BANK

reference • cohesion • feature • adaptation • subject • characteristic

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

repeat > reference > precise chain

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. This species uses ___.
2. Such adaptations allow ___.
3. Another characteristic is ___.

5 COMPARE

A The fox... The fox...

B This animal... It... The species...

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Explanation

Make sequence, cause and technical relationships explicit.

Introduce a phenomenon
Name what happens and the main condition or cause.

Sequence
Guide the reader through stages in the correct order.

Cause and effect
Show exactly what causes each change.

Conditional language
Explain what changes when a condition changes.

Technical precision
Choose verbs that state the mechanism accurately.

Link backwards
Refer clearly to an earlier stage or change.

Introduce a phenomenon

Name what happens and the main condition or cause.

1 CORE PHRASES

occurs when...	is caused by...	begins when...
happens because...	**describes the process in which...**	**takes place when...**

2 PRECISION BANK

phenomenon • process • cause • condition • occurs • results

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

simple > precise > technical

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. ___ occurs when ___.
2. This process begins when ___.
3. The phenomenon is caused by ___.

5 COMPARE

A It just happens.

B It occurs when ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Sequence

Guide the reader through stages in the correct order.

EXPLANATION

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

Initially...	Next...	Subsequently...
Once this has happened...	**During the next stage...**	**Eventually...**

2 PRECISION BANK

stage • initially • subsequently • eventually • cycle • phase

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

next > subsequently > final stage

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Initially, ___.
2. Once ___, the next stage ___.
3. Eventually, ___.

5 COMPARE

A Then... then...

B Initially... Subsequently... Eventually...

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Cause and effect

Show exactly what causes each change.

1 CORE PHRASES

because...	therefore...	consequently...
as a result...	**this causes...**	**which results in...**

2 PRECISION BANK

cause • effect • results • triggers • leads • consequence

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

link > clear cause > chain reaction

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Because ___, ___.
2. This causes ___, which results in ___.
3. Consequently, ___.

5 COMPARE

A This happens, and then that happens.

B ___ causes ___, which ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Conditional language

Explain what changes when a condition changes.

1 CORE PHRASES

if...	when...	unless...
provided that...	**when the temperature reaches...**	**if the supply stops...**

2 PRECISION BANK

condition • unless • provided • depends • threshold • variable

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

possible > conditional > required

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. If ___, then ___.
2. Unless ___, the process ___.
3. Provided that ___, ___.

5 COMPARE

A It will happen.

B It will happen if ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Technical precision

Choose verbs that state the mechanism accurately.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

results in...	enables...	prevents...
increases...	**decreases...**	**transfers...**

2 PRECISION BANK

absorbs • releases • transfers • converts • prevents • increases

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

general > specific > mechanistic

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. The ___ transfers ___ to ___.
2. This prevents ___ from ___.
3. As ___ increases, ___ decreases.

5 COMPARE

A It makes it work.

B It transfers energy to ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Link backwards

Refer clearly to an earlier stage or change.

1 CORE PHRASES

this process...	this change...	the resulting...
these particles...	**the previous stage...**	**the energy released...**

2 PRECISION BANK

reference • resulting • previous • particles • process • stage

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

vague > clear > precise

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. This process causes ___.
2. The resulting ___ then ___.
3. During the previous stage, ___.

5 COMPARE

A This does it.

B This change causes ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Discussion

Represent more than one view fairly before reaching a reasoned conclusion.

Introduce the issue
Frame the question without revealing a one-sided conclusion.

Arguments for
Present a supporting argument and explain its basis.

Arguments against
Present an opposing argument accurately and respectfully.

Add evidence
Support each view with relevant examples or information.

Contrast viewpoints
Move clearly between the views being considered.

Qualify
Avoid claims that sound certain when they depend on context.

Counterargument
Respond to a point while recognising any valid part of it.

Balanced conclusion
Weigh the arguments and state what the evidence suggests.

Introduce the issue

Frame the question without revealing a one-sided conclusion.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

There is considerable debate about...

One question is whether...

People hold different views on...

The issue concerns...

Opinions differ about...

This discussion considers...

2 PRECISION BANK

issue • debate • viewpoint • question • consider • opinion

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

open > focused > balanced

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. One question is whether ___.
2. People hold different views on ___.
3. This discussion considers ___.

5 COMPARE

A Obviously, everyone agrees...

B One question is whether ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Arguments for

Present a supporting argument and explain its basis.

1 CORE PHRASES

Supporters argue...	One advantage is...	In favour of this view...
Those who support ___ suggest...	**A possible benefit is...**	**This could improve...**

2 PRECISION BANK

supporter • advantage • benefit • improve • argument • evidence

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

claim > reasoned argument > evidence-based case

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Supporters argue ___ because ___.
2. One advantage is ___, which ___.
3. Evidence for this view includes ___.

5 COMPARE

A This side is right.

B Supporters argue ___ because ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Arguments against

Present an opposing argument accurately and respectfully.

1 CORE PHRASES

Opponents suggest...	A possible disadvantage is...	Critics argue...
Those who disagree point out...	**One concern is...**	**This may lead to...**

2 PRECISION BANK

opponent • disadvantage • concern • risk • critic • consequence

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

concern > objection > strong challenge

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Opponents suggest ___ because ___.
2. One concern is that ___.
3. Critics point to ___.

5 COMPARE

A The other side is silly.

B Opponents raise the concern that ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Add evidence

Support each view with relevant examples or information.

1 CORE PHRASES

For example...	Evidence for this view...	This is supported by...
One study found...	**A relevant example is...**	**According to...**

2 PRECISION BANK

evidence • source • example • relevant • supports • indicates

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

example > supporting evidence > strong evidence

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. For example, ___.
2. This is supported by ___, which ___.
3. According to ___, ___.

5 COMPARE

A It is true because I think so.

B Evidence from ___ suggests ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Contrast viewpoints

Move clearly between the views being considered.

1 CORE PHRASES

Conversely...	In contrast...	On the other hand...
Whereas supporters...	**However, opponents...**	**By comparison...**

2 PRECISION BANK

contrast • conversely • whereas • viewpoint • difference • comparison

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

shift > contrast > direct comparison

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Whereas supporters ___, opponents ___.
2. Conversely, ___.
3. In contrast to ___, ___.

5 COMPARE

A But...

B Conversely, ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Qualify

Avoid claims that sound certain when they depend on context.

1 CORE PHRASES

to some extent...	in some circumstances...	may...
could...	**often...**	**for some groups...**

2 PRECISION BANK

extent • circumstance • may • likely • depends • generally

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

possible > likely > certain

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. This may ___ when ___.
2. To some extent, ___; however, ___.
3. For some groups, ___.

5 COMPARE

A This always works.

B This may work when ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Counterargument

Respond to a point while recognising any valid part of it.

1 CORE PHRASES

While this is a valid point...	However, this does not consider...	Although ___ may be true...
This argument is limited because...	**A response to this concern is...**	**Nevertheless...**

2 PRECISION BANK

valid • limited • overlooks • response • nevertheless • consider

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

acknowledge > challenge > weigh

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. While ___ is valid, it does not consider ___.
2. Although ___, ___.
3. This argument is limited because ___.

5 COMPARE

A That is wrong.

B This view overlooks ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Balanced conclusion

Weigh the arguments and state what the evidence suggests.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

Overall...	Having considered both views...	The evidence suggests...
On balance...	**The stronger argument is...**	**A reasonable conclusion is...**

2 PRECISION BANK

overall • balance • weigh • conclusion • evidence • reasonable

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

summary > judgement > qualified conclusion

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. On balance, ___ because ___.
2. Having considered both views, ___.
3. The evidence suggests ___, although ___.

5 COMPARE

A Both sides are good.

B On balance, the evidence favours ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Recount

Select significant moments and reflect, rather than logging every event.

Open context
Orient the reader with time, place and purpose.

Chronology
Move through selected events with varied time references.

Significant moment
Slow down at the moment that mattered most.

Reaction and reflection
Explain what you noticed, learnt or reconsidered.

Description
Select precise details from the actual experience.

Conclusion
End with outcome, reflection or changed understanding.

Open context

Orient the reader with time, place and purpose.

1 CORE PHRASES

Last Tuesday...	Earlier that morning...	Our visit began...
At the start of the day...	**We arrived at...**	**The purpose of the visit was...**

2 PRECISION BANK

context • arrived • began •
purpose • location • group

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

basic > focused > engaging

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Last ___, we ___.
2. Our visit began at ___ when ___.
3. The purpose of the day was ___.

5 COMPARE

A We went somewhere.

B Last Tuesday, our class visited ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Chronology

Move through selected events with varied time references.

1 CORE PHRASES

Initially...	Shortly afterwards...	Later...
Eventually...	**By the time...**	**During the afternoon...**

2 PRECISION BANK

initially • afterwards • later • eventually • during • before

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

next > later > time shift

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Initially, ___.
2. Shortly afterwards, ___.
3. By the time ___, ___.

5 COMPARE

A Then... then... then...

B Initially... Later... Eventually...

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Significant moment

Slow down at the moment that mattered most.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

The highlight was...	Most memorable was...	Unexpectedly...
The moment that stood out...	**A turning point came when...**	**What surprised me most was...**

2 PRECISION BANK

highlight • memorable • unexpected • turning point • surprised • significant

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

interesting > memorable > unforgettable

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. The moment that stood out was ___ because ___.
2. Unexpectedly, ___.
3. What surprised me most was ___.

5 COMPARE

A It was good.

B The highlight was ___ because ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Reaction and reflection

Explain what you noticed, learnt or reconsidered.

Rossmore School

1 CORE PHRASES

I realised...	I was struck by...	Looking back...
This made me consider...	**I had not expected...**	**I now understand...**

2 PRECISION BANK

realised • reflected • understood • noticed • considered • changed

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

reaction > reflection > insight

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. I was struck by ___.
2. Looking back, I realise ___.
3. This made me reconsider ___.

5 COMPARE

A I liked it.

B I realised ___ because ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Description

Select precise details from the actual experience.

1 CORE PHRASES

The ___ was...	Around us...	From the platform...
The guide demonstrated...	**We could hear...**	**Close up...**

2 PRECISION BANK

observed • demonstrated • surrounded • echoed • towered • glimmered

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

general > specific > vivid and accurate

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. Around us, ___.
2. Close up, the ___ appeared ___.
3. We could hear ___ from ___.

5 COMPARE

A It was amazing.

B The ___ towered above us.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Conclusion

End with outcome, reflection or changed understanding.

1 CORE PHRASES

By the end...	The experience showed...	I left feeling...
The day changed my view of...	**Most importantly...**	**I would now...**

2 PRECISION BANK

outcome • experience • understanding • perspective • recommend • future

3 FORMALITY OR STRENGTH

ending > reflection > lasting insight

4 BUILD A SENTENCE

1. By the end, ___.
2. The experience showed me ___.
3. I left with a new understanding of ___.

5 COMPARE

A Then we went home.

B I left understanding ___.

Which better suits this audience and purpose? Why?

6 ADAPT IT

Replace one vague word. Combine two useful parts. Adjust the strength. Then create an original version.

AUTHOR CHECK

Does it fit the genre, audience, purpose, register and exact meaning?

Word Lab

Transform a choice when it is close, but not yet exact

UNIVERSAL TOOL

Rossmore School

Make it more precise
Replace a vague word with one that shows exact meaning.

Make it more formal
Adjust register for audience and purpose. Formal is not always better.

Change the mood
Select one vocabulary family and keep the description consistent.

Turn it into a phrase
Expand a useful word with specific information.

Swap the verb
Choose a verb by manner and effect, not as a random synonym.

Shade-o-Meter
Order related words only when their intensity genuinely differs.

Avoid repetition
Create a clear reference chain or restructure the sentence.

Word class switch
Explore related forms, then choose the grammar the sentence needs.

BACK TO HOME

Make it more precise

Replace a vague word with one that shows exact meaning.

Rossmore School

LOOK AT THE CHANGE

went: crept / strode / stumbled

said: admitted / warned / insisted

thing: specify the object or part

nice: name the exact quality

ASK YOURSELF

1. What exactly happened?
2. How did it move or sound?
3. Which choice matches the context?
4. Can the noun do more work?

Keep the meaning accurate. A change is useful only when it improves the sentence for this context.

Make it more formal

Adjust register for audience and purpose. Formal is not always better.

Rossmore School

LOOK AT THE CHANGE

sort this out / address this issue

a lot of / a significant number of

tell me / please confirm

kids / pupils / young people

ASK YOURSELF

1. Who will read this?
2. How much distance or respect is needed?
3. Does the phrase still sound natural?
4. Would a neutral choice be clearer?

Keep the meaning accurate. A change is useful only when it improves the sentence for this context.

Change the mood

Select one vocabulary family and keep the description consistent.

Rossmore School

LOOK AT THE CHANGE

calm: drifted, hushed, softened

joyful: brightened, lifted, warm

uneasy: hovered, faint, uncertain

threatening: loomed, closed in, harsh

ASK YOURSELF

1. What should the reader feel?
2. Which word breaks the mood?
3. Can one detail carry the mood?
4. Is the intensity right?

Keep the meaning accurate. A change is useful only when it improves the sentence for this context.

Turn it into a phrase

Expand a useful word with specific information.

Rossmore School

LOOK AT THE CHANGE

fog / through the thickening fog

river / beside the fast-flowing river

warned / warned the crowd about...

concern / a concern affecting...

ASK YOURSELF

1. Where?
2. When?
3. In what manner?
4. With what effect?

Keep the meaning accurate. A change is useful only when it improves the sentence for this context.

Swap the verb

Choose a verb by manner and effect, not as a random synonym.

Rossmore School

LOOK AT THE CHANGE

slow: edged / shuffled / drifted

fast: darted / sprinted / hurtled

speech: murmured / stated / snapped

change: increased / shifted / collapsed

ASK YOURSELF

1. What is the subject doing?
2. At what speed?
3. With what intention?
4. What changes because of it?

Keep the meaning accurate. A change is useful only when it improves the sentence for this context.

Shade-o-Meter

Order related words only when their intensity genuinely differs.

Rossmore School

LOOK AT THE CHANGE

uneasy / afraid / terrified / panic-stricken

warm / hot / sweltering / searing

request / recommend / urge / demand

concern / significant concern / serious concern

ASK YOURSELF

1. Are these really the same kind of meaning?
2. Which degree fits the evidence?
3. Would a weaker word be more believable?
4. Can you explain the difference?

Keep the meaning accurate. A change is useful only when it improves the sentence for this context.

Avoid repetition

Create a clear reference chain or restructure the sentence.

Rossmore School

LOOK AT THE CHANGE

the fox / the animal / it / this predator

the process / this stage / the change

repeat the key word deliberately

combine or reorder two sentences

ASK YOURSELF

1. Is the reference still clear?
2. Should the key term repeat for accuracy?
3. Can two sentences combine?
4. Would a pronoun cause confusion?

Keep the meaning accurate. A change is useful only when it improves the sentence for this context.

Word class switch

Explore related forms, then choose the grammar the sentence needs.

Rossmore School

LOOK AT THE CHANGE

danger / endanger / dangerous / dangerously

decision / decide / decisive / decisively

strength / strengthen / strong / strongly

description / describe / descriptive

ASK YOURSELF

1. Which word class fits the gap?
2. Does the spelling change?
3. Does the meaning stay accurate?
4. Can the verb make the sentence tighter?

Keep the meaning accurate. A change is useful only when it improves the sentence for this context.

Author's Choice

Greater Depth prompts for precision, control and independence

OPTIONAL CHALLENGE

Rossmore School

1. Which word is most precise rather than most impressive?
2. Can you create a deliberate contrast?
3. Can you alter register while keeping the meaning?
4. Can you combine two choices without over-writing?
5. Can you sustain one image or mood?
6. Can you justify the choice for audience and purpose?
7. Can you reject every option and create a better one?
8. Can you make the phrase more concise?

Strong writers choose, test, reject and refine. They do not add difficulty for its own sake.

Teacher mode

Short routines that support Experience, Vocabulary, Shape, Sentence Stacking and Independent Write

STAFF GUIDANCE

The five-minute Vocabulary Studio routine
The deck feeds Rossmore jotting and discussion before pupils write.

Quick classroom routines
Use a short routine to make vocabulary discussion active.

Scaffolding and release
Move pupils towards independent choice rather than longer copied models.

Discuss meaning, nuance, register and effect before pupils use unfamiliar vocabulary.

BACK TO HOME

The five-minute Vocabulary Studio routine

The deck feeds Rossmore jotting and discussion before pupils write.

TEACHER MODE

Rossmore School

1. Identify the writing job and intended effect.
2. Browse one focused bank, then jot useful choices.
3. Discuss meaning, nuance and register.
4. Adapt or combine choices before writing.
5. Read the sentence aloud and justify one decision.

Quick classroom routines

Use a short routine to make vocabulary discussion active.

TEACHER MODE

1. 60-second magpie: jot only words that fit today's purpose.
2. Choose three, reject one: explain which option does not fit.
3. Shade-o-Meter debate: order words and defend the placement.
4. Strongest verb: compare impact, precision and plausibility.
5. Phrase surgery: shorten, reorder or replace one part.
6. Formal switch: recast the same meaning for a new audience.

Scaffolding and release

Move pupils towards independent choice rather than longer copied models.

TEACHER MODE

1. Provided: teacher introduces a small, relevant bank.
2. Choose: pupil selects language for a stated effect.
3. Combine: pupil joins compatible choices.
4. Adapt: pupil changes wording, structure or register.
5. Create: pupil rejects the bank and authors a better choice.
6. Justify: pupil explains why the wording fits purpose and audience.