

Writing in the Rainforest

Lesson Two

Enliven Your Story – Scenes

The only way to do this wrong is to not do it at all!

1. Two techniques for writing your stories

- **narration (telling)**
 - also called exposition, writing that informs, explains, or describes
 - author tells what happened, narrates an event or situation
 - people naturally tend to narrate when writing
 - **scene (showing)**
 - one unit within a story
 - building block that can be used to tell a story
 - occurs in one place
 - period of uninterrupted action
 - moves the story forward
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2. Showing vs. telling

- **telling** is narrating, summarizing, reflecting, lecturing – telling is narration/exposition – telling is informing
 - **showing** allows the reader to experience what is happening, like a little movie playing out on the page, gives the reader a chance to live out the moment – showing is experiencing – showing is scene
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3. When to show and when to tell?

- show the most important parts, tell the rest
 - story becomes too long if everything shown in scene
 - story not as vivid if nothing is in scene
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4. Elements of a scene

- **size**
 - a couple of paragraphs to any number of pages

- **beginning, middle, end**
 - complete story, can stand alone as a unit
- **setting**
 - scene happens in one place, only one location
- **characters**
 - scene has characters, people doing and saying something
- **conflict, tension, resolution**
 - **conflict** - struggle between opposing forces
 - **tension** - things that happen to interfere with person getting what they want - creates strain, emotional uncertainty, anxiety
 - **resolution** - issues are addressed
- **dialogue**
 - hear the characters speak in their own words
- **action**
 - every scene has action of some sort, something happens
- **character's thoughts, feelings, observations**
 - see this through the character's actions or by statements provided by the author
- **purpose**
 - scenes advance the story, show conflict, introduce or develop character, provide information, set up what is to come later
- **vivid language**
 - action verbs and concrete nouns
- **background info**
 - details that set up, situate scene in larger context
 - gives reader what he/she needs to understand

Notes: _____
