

## *Showing and Telling*

**Showing:** Writers provide readers with enough concrete, vivid details so readers can draw their own conclusions, experience events first hand through the five senses of characters, witness events in real time, in actual scenes, with action and dialogue, and remains in the POV character's experiences. Evokes emotions and involves readers in the story and makes them active participants.

**Telling:** Writers offer readers conclusions and interpretations instead of letting readers think for themselves, provides a secondhand report after an event which summarizes events that happened in the past or offers general statements that don't happen at any specific time. Distances readers from the events of the story and from the characters and makes them passive recipients of information. Is abstract and gives readers facts.

### **Sometimes Telling is Better Than Showing**

1. **First Drafts.** Focus on the big picture.
2. **Unimportant Details.** Telling uses fewer words than showing and can sum up mundane or less unimportant parts your readers need to know.
3. **Transitions.** Telling is useful transitioning between scenes, when you're jumping ahead in time, switch POV, or jump to another location.
4. **Repeated Information.** Telling is a way to avoid repeating information.
5. **Repeated Events.** Telling can summarize repeated events. Dramatize one and sum up the rest.
6. **Pacing.** Telling can deliver information to the reader quickly without slowing the pace and gives readers a breather following nonstop action of the previous scenes.
7. **Context.** A little telling right before a scene can provide context as well as sum up slow development that culminates in a scene.
8. **Suspense.** Use telling to create suspense by arousing an expectation in your readers.

**Find the right balance.** Bring your scenes to life by showing your characters in action and showing their emotions. Support these dramatized scenes with telling that compresses time and sums up less important information quickly.