

Writing Descriptions That "Show" Instead of "Tell"



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When you write, you can present information in two main ways—through telling and showing. "Telling" gives the reader information; "showing" recreates experience.

Telling

You explain a subject to readers.

Our raft approached a set of rapids. They were the biggest challenge we

Showing

Readers see, hear, smell, taste, and touch the subject.

The rumbling grew as our raft bobbed toward the drop in the river. The air moistened and smelled of morning dew.

faced. We weren't sure we would make it. We made it.

Ahead of us, copper water plunged down a set of boiling rapids, which carved their curving way among jagged cliffs. My mouth went dry with a tang of fear. "Hold on, everybody!" I shouted.

Your Turn Read the "Showing" example and write down four words or phrases that let you see, hear, smell, taste, or touch.

(Answers will vary.)

rumbling, bobbed, drop, air moistened, smelled of morning dew, copper water, plunged down, boiling rapids, carved, curving, jagged cliffs, mouth dry, tang of fear, Hold on, everybody, shouted

- See more at <http://k12.thoughtfullearning.com/content/telling-vs-showing>