

## SHOW, DON'T TELL

### Handout

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Show through:

- Language and setting
- Actions
- Dialogue
- Characterization
- Body gestures and movements
- Sensory details
- Emotions
- Sex

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### When to Show:

Key scenes

- First meeting – set up
- Characterization – learn about characters through their actions,  
Body language, gestures, dialogue
- Conflict – put them in situations which show their conflict, turmoil  
Make them make hard decisions
- Love scene
- Turning points
- Climax
- Resolutions

**When to Tell:**

- \* Transitional scenes between strong action scenes or pivotal moments
- Moving characters from one place to another
- Short descriptions of time and place – even then, show through the characters' eyes and their feelings and reactions to it
- Paint the mood or atmosphere
- \* Impart information – use sparingly