



# Choosing the Right Words

Word choice is the **use of rich, colourful, precise language** that makes a story come to life. It allows the reader to better imagine what is happening in the story. A\* compositions display many of these elements:

## Vivid Verbs

Vivid verbs increase your chances of making a memorable impression.



The out-of-control bicyclist **screamed** wildly as her 10-speed bicycle **careened** down the hill.

## Strong, Specific Nouns

Use strong, specific nouns to describe objects and places.



Sam lives in a **house**. (*general*)



Sam lives in a **bungalow/an HDB flat/a terraced house**. (*strong*)



Sam lives in **Mandarin Gardens**. (*specific*)

## Sensory Details

Use sensory details to engage the senses of sight, sound, taste, touch and smell.

The **sun blazed in the sky** as Jamie walked along the water's edge. There was a **rhythmic murmur of waves** breaking and rushing in to shore. **Wet shell-crushed sand oozed** between Jamie's bare feet, and her nostrils filled with the **odour of dried seaweed** which had been washed up on the shore.



## Showing Sentences

Sentences which 'show' instead of simply 'tell' give readers something to 'see' in their minds.



*Telling Sentence:*  
Adeline was **afraid**.



*Showing Sentences:*

Adeline sat in the dentist's chair without saying a word. She had never been to see a dentist before. She felt breathless and her throat became dry. Her hands were sweating and she crossed and uncrossed her legs every few minutes. As the dentist came closer to her, her eyes opened wider and wider.

## Figurative Language

Use figurative language to express ideas in vivid or imaginative ways. Do so sparingly; select figures of speech not to show off, but to enhance the story's mood, meaning or theme.

<i>Figurative Devices</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Example</i>
<b>Idiom</b>	<i>a group of words in a fixed order that have a particular meaning that is different from the meaning of each word on its own</i>	' <b>A blessing in disguise</b> ' is a good thing that seemed bad at first.
<b>Simile</b>	<i>a comparison between two different things using 'like' or 'as'</i>	The <b>cat's eyes</b> glowed in the dark <u>like</u> <b>coals on fire</b> .
<b>Metaphor</b>	<i>an implied comparison between two different things which does not use 'like' or 'as'</i>	My <b>throat</b> was a <b>desert</b> , dry and parched.
<b>Alliteration</b>	<i>a series of words in a row (or close together) which have the same first consonant sound</i>	The <u>r</u> iver <u>r</u> ushed <u>r</u> apidly over the <u>r</u> ocks.
<b>Hyperbole</b>	<i>an exaggeration or overstatement</i>	Cedric had <b>a million things</b> to do that day.
<b>Personification</b>	<i>a figure of speech in which human characteristics are assigned to nonhuman things</i>	The <b>fierce</b> wind <b>yelled in fury</b> throughout the night.