

### Teaching notes

Students often fall into the trap of telling the reader everything in their descriptions, leaving nothing to the imagination and making their writing a bit dull! This activity is designed to encourage them to 'show' rather than 'tell'.

- Print and cut up the cards below. Make sure you keep the action cards separate from the character cards. You should make enough copies for each student to have one action card and one character card - it is fine if some are duplicated.
- Give each student one action and one character card. They should write a description of the person doing the action. They cannot directly tell us who they are or what they are doing, but should write in such a way as to show us these things.
- Choose some students to read out their description - can the class guess who they are and what they are doing?

### You could also try this:

- Introduce the concept of 'showing rather than telling' by showing students some boring descriptions which 'tell' - for example, 'Mr Brown was angry'. Get them to rewrite each statement, showing rather than telling.
- Another way to do this is to put students in pairs and ask one of them to act out an emotion. Their partner should observe them closely and describe in detail how they looked and acted. They can then swap over and repeat the task.

Action cards



ironing	reading a letter	helping a young child with their homework	packing a suitcase
mowing the lawn	shopping	hanging out the washing	getting on the bus
putting away the groceries	brushing their teeth	making a sandwich	doing the washing up

Character cards



a flamboyant actor	an X Factor contestant	a woman who is very tired	a man whose wife has just gone into labour
a headteacher who is about to lose their job	someone who suffers from OCD	a weightlifter	a hypochondriac nurse
someone who has recently been released from prison	a woman who has just run the London marathon	a new mother whose baby won't stop screaming	someone who has just won the Lottery