

Snapshots

Define: *Paint a picture with your words, using the five senses – smell, hear, see, touch, taste; when a writer zooms in closer and closer on the subject, showing more specific action, smells, sounds, colors, and other physical elements.*

Snapshots = close-ups of events, location, people

What does a writer do to create a snapshot?

Show, Don't Tell **Action**

- Select an important moment in the story and ZOOM IN
- For example, write a page on what happens in a few seconds
- The attention you give the moment increases its importance
- Descriptive word choice
- Five Senses
- Use a visual aid to help inspire your writing (draw it)
- Act it out to “see” the action again (tableaux)
- Metaphor
- Simile
- Onomatopoeia (sounds words)
- Personification
- Different spellings (color vs. colour)
- Hyperbole (greatly exaggerate – ex: I’m starving; I’m so hungry I could eat a horse; I’m freezing)

Why do authors use snapshots?

- To set a mood/tone
- To put the reader right into the action
- To add importance to events
- To hook the reader
- To help readers understand something confusing
- To expand an important moment (ex: “Aha” moment)

Thoughtshots

Define: *A description of thought/feeling at a specific moment; expresses the speaker’s personality and reflections.*

Thoughtshots = expression of thoughts and feelings

What does a writer do to create a thoughtshot?

Show AND Tell **Reaction**

- Use internal-dialogue
- Use figurative language (see snapshot column)
- Use feelings/emotions
- Selection of Point of View becomes critical (voice)
- Slang/colloquialisms (ex: y’all, ain’t, hoagie vs. grinder, soda vs. pop, etc) –best for thoughtshots
- Metaphor
- Simile
- Onomatopoeia (sounds words)
- Personification

Why do authors use thoughtshots?

- To show what a character is thinking/feeling
- To show a perspective
- To move the plot forward
- To express voice and personality
- To add depth and significance to a moment

Snapshot Example: [Albus Dumbledore arrives at Privet Drive]

A man appeared on the corner the cat had been watching, appeared so suddenly and silently you'd have thought he'd just popped out of the ground. The cat's tail twitched and its eyes narrowed.

Nothing like this man had ever been seen in Privet Drive. He was tall, thin and very old, judging by the silver of his hair and beard, which were both long enough to tuck into his belt. He was wearing long robes, a purple cloak which swept the ground and high-heeled, buckled boots. His blue eyes were light, bright and sparkling behind half-moon spectacles and his nose was very long and crooked, as though it had been broken at least twice. This man's name was Albus Dumbledore.

Albus Dumbledore didn't seem to realize that he had just arrived in a street where everything from his name to his boots was unwelcome. He was busy rummaging in his cloak, looking for something. But he did seem to realize he was being watched, because he looked up suddenly at the cat, which was still staring at him from the other end of the street. For some reason, the sight of the cat seemed to amuse him. He chuckled and muttered, 'I should have known.'

He had found what he was looking for in his inside pocket. It seemed to be a silver cigarette lighter. He flicked it open, held it up in the air and clicked it. The nearest street lamp went out with a little pop. He clicked it again – the next lamp flickered into darkness. Twelve times he clicked the Put-Outer, until the only lights left in the whole street were two tiny pinpricks in the distance, which were the eyes of the cat watching him. If anyone looked out of their window now, even beady-eyed Mrs. Dursley, they wouldn't be able to see anything that was happening down on the pavement. Dumbledore slipped the Put-Outer back inside his cloak and set off down the street towards number four, where he sat down on the wall next to the cat. He didn't look at it, but after a moment he spoke to it.

– J.K.Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*

Thoughtshot Example: [Ron & Harry drive a flying Ford Anglia to Hogwarts]

It was as though they had been plunged into a fabulous dream. This, thought Harry, was surely the only way to travel—past swirls and turrets of snowy cloud, in a car full of hot, bright sunlight, with a fat pack of toffees in the glove compartment, and the prospect of seeing Fred's and George's jealous faces when they landed smoothly and spectacularly on the sweeping lawn in front of Hogwarts castle.

– J.K.Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*

EXPLODE A MOMENT

When I pulled the trigger I did not hear the bang or feel the kick — one never does when a shot goes home — but I heard the devilish roar of glee that went up from the crowd. In that instant, in too short a time, one would have thought, even for the bullet to get there, a mysterious, terrible change had come over the elephant. He neither stirred nor fell, but every line of his body had altered. He looked suddenly stricken, shrunken, immensely old, as though the frightful impact of the bullet had paralyzed him without knocking him down. At last, after what seemed a long time — it might have been five seconds, I dare say — he sagged flabbily to his knees. His mouth slobbered. An enormous senility seemed to have settled upon him. One could have imagined him thousands of years old. I fired again into the same spot. At the second shot he did not collapse but climbed with desperate slowness to his feet and stood weakly upright, with legs sagging and head drooping. I fired a third time. That was the shot that did for him. You could see the agony of it jolt his whole body and knock the last remnant of strength from his legs. But in falling he seemed for a moment to rise, for as his hind legs collapsed beneath him he seemed to tower upward like a huge rock toppling, his trunk reaching skyward like a tree. He trumpeted, for the first and only time. And then down he came, his belly towards me, with a crash that seemed to shake the ground even where I lay.

[from George Orwell's essay "Shooting an Elephant", 1950]

SHRINK A CENTURY

THE EARLY summer days on a farm are the happiest and fairest days of the year. Lilacs bloom and make the air sweet, and then fade. Apple blossoms come with the lilacs, and the bees visit around among the apple trees. The days grow warm and soft. School ends, and children have time to play and to fish for trouts in the brook. Avery often brought a trout home in his pocket, warm and stiff and ready to be fried for supper.

Now that school was over, Fern visited the barn almost every day, to sit quietly on her stool. The animals treated her as an equal. The sheep lay calmly at her feet.

Around the first of July, the work horses were hitched to the mowing machine, and Mr. Zuckerman climbed into the seat and drove into the field. All morning you could hear the rattle of the machine as it went round and round, while the tall grass fell down behind the cutter bar in long green swathes. Next day, if there was no thunder shower, all hands would help rake and pitch and load, and the hay would be hauled to the barn in the high hay wagon, with Fern and Avery riding at the top of the load.

[from E.B. White's novel *Charlotte's Web*, 1952]