C:\Users\Bronwen\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\NC7NJKG7\MC900441880[1].wmf**7 Ways to Improve Your Original Composition**

1. Begin and end strong (make it interesting!)
2. Focus on a shorter period of time
3. Try to avoid the obvious (what is unexpected?)
4. Use figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole)
5. Use sentence openers (see your handout)
6. Use strong diction (words)
7. Show vs. tell

*Ways to Turn Telling Into Showing*

i) Use all the senses, such as sight, smell, sound, taste, and texture to describe the scene.

ii) Use vivid power words that help the reader see what you see. Eg. Instead of “Mary messily wrote her name”, try “Mary scribbled her name.”

iii). Tend to use active verbs rather than passive or helping verbs (am, is, are, was, were, have, had, has, be, being, been, do, does, did, will, would, should, may, might, must, can, could, etc.).

*Passive Voice:* The car was speeding down the road.   
*Active Voice:* The car raced down the road.

*Passive:* The report was read by Karen.  
*Active:* Karen read the report.

*Passive:* The crash was witnessed by a pedestrian.  
*Active:* A pedestrian witnessed the crash.

iv) Add scenes that show conflict, or focus on how a character is dealing with a situation. Physical action, facial expressions and dialogue show what is happening.

v) Use figurative language, such as similes and metaphors.

Eg. “Prim’s face is as fresh as a raindrop, as lovely as the primrose for which she was named.”