

THE  
ULTIMATE  
NOT-SO-SECRET  
COMPO PHRASES  
COMIC GUIDE

The Right Word





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# Hello Teachers and Parents!

Do your students and children actively escape writing compositions?

Do they spend wayyy more time than they should staring at blank foolscap papers, waiting for the right words to express the ideas in their heads?

Are you tired of nudging them to memorise creative phrases and model stories, knowing rote memorising is a stopgap measure that isn't quite working anyway?

If you've answered 'yes' to any of the questions, you're not alone!

As a trio of teachers teaching at the English Specialist Centre The Right Word, we feel your pain. But we are happy to share that there's a better way - one that's helped more than a thousand kids for over 10 years.

We're excited for you to use these tried and tested methods with your students to build writing muscles and consistent practice.

The materials in this guide can be (and have been) adapted to help students at different learning levels improve. They've even inspired reluctant writers to write for fun! Really.





# FARTS

We're big believers in meeting students where they are, which can sometimes mean letting go (get it?) and embracing toilet humour. For 10 years and counting, we've seen students improve because FARTS is memorable and easy to apply.

- F**eelings
- A**ctions
- R**eactions
- T**houghts
- S**peech

Let's face it: 'He was anxious' doesn't have the same effect on the reader as 'A sense of anxiety crept up his spine'.

By dropping FARTS through their compositions, students help their readers to connect with the characters and experience the story.

Young minds may not relate to some characters and struggle to create FARTS for them. If they don't generally talk to their neighbours, creating a story on neighbourliness can be abstract - and that's completely understandable.

If this could be an issue, discuss how the character might feel before the students start writing using the Master Phrases as prompts. This helps them to empathise with the characters and imagine how they might act, think or say.



# SPAM

Once your students master their FARTS, level up with SPAM.

- S**imiles
- P**ersonification
- A**lliteration
- M**etaphor

Despite its name, the goal isn't to excessively use SPAM (or other) phrases.

Adding all the best ingredients in the world to one dish wouldn't make it delectable. So like a chef learning to balance flavours in each dish, your students/children need to learn what phrases work best for the tantalising tales they'll create.



# Cheating in a Test

Theme: Honesty

# 01





## FARTS and SPAMS Phrases to describe Scenario 1: Cheating in a Test

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### Summary of Scenario 1 in 'Tell' Paragraphs

**A**

Ben felt anxious as he forgot to study for his Math test. He knew he could not fail the test. Mr Kiran would tell his basketball coach to take him off the team.

**B**

He tore off a page of his notes. He told himself that if he was careful, everything would be alright. Then, he kept it in his pocket.

**C**

During the test, he looked around and saw Amira. She did not look like she was having trouble. Ben was in a dilemma as to whether to cheat or not. Then, he thought about what his mother would say if he was caught cheating. Finally, he remembered what he learnt in a civics and moral education lesson and decided not to cheat.

**D**

When Ben received his results, he was sad when he saw his marks. He knew he deserved a scolding from Mr Kiran but he was glad he did not cheat. Mr Kiran wondered why Ben was smiling. After the incident, Ben learnt that he should revise and work hard for his next test.

#### PSST!

The paragraphs above are what students often write if they are at a loss for words. Although the paragraphs look all right, they are too flat and dull. With the FARTS and SPAM phrases, you should be able to craft a more vivid description of this scenario with ease!

## 'Tell' Paragraph 1A

A

Ben felt anxious as he forgot to study for his Math test. He knew he could not fail the test. Mr Kiran would tell his basketball coach to take him off the team.



### Feelings, Actions, Reactions, Thoughts, Speech (FARTS)

- A sense of anxiety crept up his spine when Ben heard Mr Kiran announce the commencement of the examination
- Gulpd as he recalled Mr Kiran's threat to take him off the basketball team
- Scanned the classroom hoping to see that his classmates had also forgotten the test
- Anxiety heightened when he realised he was the only one unprepared
- "I can't fail this paper! I just can't! Should I...?" Ben contemplated.



### Similes, Personification, Alliteration, Metaphor (SPAM)

- A sea of anxiety engulfed him, diminishing all hope that he had misheard what Mr Kiran, his Maths teacher, said.
- Mr Kiran's threat to take him off the basketball team loomed over him like a dark cloud.
- Scanned the classroom hoping to see that his classmates had also forgotten the test.
- However, he was greeted by their characteristic chattiness.
- He became increasingly worried as terrible thoughts dominated his mind.

# Acquire and Apply Exercise 1

The 'Tell' paragraphs are an example of what students often end up writing when they forget to use descriptive language. Now, it's your turn to transform these plain paragraphs into stories that are enthralling and captivating!

Are you ready to apply what you've learned?

Grab some writing paper and expand on the key components of this scenario! Using the words in orange as a starter, continue to write the story using the FARTS or SPAM phrases you read earlier on page 20-23.

## 1A

“Class, get ready for the Mathematics examination. We begin in ten minutes,” Mr Kiran boomed in his baritone voice.

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### Guiding questions:

- How was Ben feeling at the moment?
- What other actions reflect Ben’s feelings?
- What might Ben think of doing next?

## 1B

Then, it became clear what he had to do.

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### Guiding questions:

- What did Ben do?
- Why would he think of such a solution?
- What would Ben tell himself?

## 1C

Alas, the solution seemed straightforward but Ben found himself fighting a battle with his conscience.

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### Guiding questions:

- What was Ben’s dilemma?
- What are some likely consequences he might think of if he chooses to cheat?
- What helped him decide between being honest and cheating?

## 1D

Ben’s day of reckoning soon arrived. Mr Kiran shared that some students had done well and some had to work harder to pull up their grades. Ben shuffled in his seat uncomfortably, wondering if he would at least pass the test.

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### Guiding questions:

- How did Ben feel when he saw his marks?
- What did he score and what did he think of his decision not to cheat?
- How did Mr Kiran respond to his reaction?