**Examples of "SHOWING -- not TELLING"**

**Example of a "telling" sentence:**

*My room was a mess.*

**Example of a "showing":**

*To enter the room, I was forced to squeeze in the small door opening, nearly getting stuck because heaps of dirty clothes obstructed the path of the door. Once inside, I had to concentrate fully on every step so that my shoes wouldn't become tangled in the laundry and cause me to fall. Steps later, after freeing my leg from a malicious pair of blue corduroy pants, I noticed that under the spot vacated by those pants was a matted piece of green shag carpet, the only piece of carpet not being smothered by clothing in the entire room. The next thing to attack me was a One Direction poster only partially pinned to the wall. The feeling of my head coming into contact with a foreign object made me whirl about in apprehension, swinging my elbow and knocking it with force against a drawer jutting out from the half-empty clothes chest. Howling in pain, I flung myself on the bed, long parted with its sheets, and wondered if I wouldn't be safer waiting in another room. (Brett Sprowl)*

**Example of a "telling" sentence:**

*Those girls are snobs.*

**Example of a "showing":**

*While two girls slowly strutted themselves past me, I heard a soft sound much like the hiss of air being let out of a tire. Their eyes slowly shifted around following my every move. It took a second, but it finally hit me like a pie in the face that they were talking about me. One of the girls raised her finger and darted it towards me. As she did this they quickly exchanged glances and the sound of giggling now replaced the whispering. I rolled my eyes in their direction, catching their amused expressions. With my glance they lifted their hands, flung their hair back over their shoulders, straightened their posture, lifted their noses, and pompously walked off. (Nancy Marshall)*

Caplan, Rebecca. *Writers in Training, A Guide to Developing a Composition Program*. Palo Alto, CA: Dale Seymour Publications, 1984.

**Example of a "telling" sentence:**

*We saw the women sitting on the couch.*

**Example of "showing":**

*We walked through a high hallway into a bright, rosy-colored space, fragilely bound into the house by French windows at either end. The windows were ajar and gleaming white against the fresh grass outside that seemed to grow a little way into the house. A breeze blew through the room, blew curtains in at one end and out the other like pale flags, twisting them up toward the frosted wedding cake of the ceiling, and then rippled over the wine-colored rug, making a shadow on it as the wind does on the sea.*

*The only completely stationary object in the room was an enormous couch on which two young women were buoyed up as though upon an anchored balloon. They were both in white, and their dresses were rippling and fluttering as if they had just been blown back in after a short flight around the house. I must have stood for a few minutes listening to the whip and snap of the curtains and the groan of a picture on the wall."*

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby, p. 8*