DIALOGUE/MONOLOGUE

- Dialogue is much like salt: too much can spoil the stew. Instead, try sprinkling it on every now and then. It is used for two reasons:
  1) advance the story or
  2) reveal something about the character or setting

When using dialogue, keep these rules in mind:

1) Punctuate correctly:
   - Set dialogue apart from surrounding narration:
     - “I wish you would use a comma and not a full stop before your dialogue tag,” she grumbled.
   - If a character’s speech is interrupted by dialogue tag or action, close and re-open speech marks.
     - “I wish you would stop interrupting.” She said, holding up her palm, “and let me finish!”
   - Always start a new paragraph when a different character starts speaking. This way it is clear who says what in a scene involving two or more characters.

2) Keep dialogue tags to a minimum.
   - “I thought you said you were arriving at four,” he said, his face thunderous. Vs.
   - He stood stiffly, arms crossed. “I thought you said you were arriving at four?”

3) Cut out filler words that make dialogue too lifelike.
   - Cut day-to-day conversation that nobody would ever care to eavesdrop on wherever possible.
SEQUENCE FOR WRITING

OPENING: Winter has not ended for three years. Day after day, I await brightness and warmth from the sun, but it never comes. The landscape has become a monotony of greys, whites, and sepias. The color of the past has become a distant memory, much like an aged old photograph that has become dirty with wear. Today, the snow felt especially wet and heavy, falling in large tufts around me. I could remember a time when I would have found this idyllic, but today it was just cold and wet and cumbersome. I couldn’t hear anything but the static in my head left over from the factory machines, and I felt nothing but the numbness of my hands – and the journal, the journal I had found tucked away in a corner of the train. I had an inkling it was somehow left for me, and I hurried to the safety of home where I could examine it discreetly.

Add details beneath each attempt to solve the problem.

- Takes the journal home
  - Goes to cupola - safe
  - Feels familiar
  - Worn initials on front
  - Finds note – last of 6
  - Samantha Stinson, 1916
  - Pages are blank

- Given a key to something important
  - Mealtime mandate
  - Town center
  - Changes - sameness
  - Old woman secretly gives key
  - Old key

- Finds a box w/a ring in it
  - Box in cupola
  - Footsteps leading from house
  - Key fits in box
  - Finds amethyst ring
  - Puts on ring – feels different

- Ring reveals the writing within the journal
  - Finds letter to her
  - Reads journal - discovers past
  - Sees light at family cemetery
  - Finds gravestone with her name on it
Begin writing your story!

What were you doing?
What were those around you doing?
What were you thinking?
How were you feeling?
Describe the scene.

Always SHOW, not tell.

Change paragraphs when...

- A new character comes along
- A new event happens
- A new idea is introduced
- The setting changes
- A new person is speaking
- Time moves forward or backward a lot
- The ”camera” moves