

## Assignment 6 - Revision and redrafting

### **Piece from Free-writing in Part 2**

Grandma's chair was made of wood and rocked backwards and forwards. The back was tall and slatted, curving slightly to allow Grandma to sit comfortably. The wooden arms curled at the end. Grandma used the curl to grip to when she got out of it. The seat was brown leather, shiny but cracked with so many bottoms having sat on it. The leather seat cover was attached by a row of brass pins along the edge. A little of the horse-hair stuffing poked out of the depression where countless bottoms had stretched it until it split under the pressure.

My lovely Grandma was gone but had she had left me a small envelope which I had opened after I had gone to bed tonight. Mum had wanted me to open it earlier, but I said it was private between Grandma and me.

'Look,' I had said, showing her the writing on the front. ***ONLY TO BE OPENED BY MOLLY. PRIVATE!***

I tiptoed downstairs and into the living room when everyone had gone to bed. The moon was shining through the window, straight onto Grandma's chair, like it was showing me the way. I walked over to the chair slowly and, for the very first time, sat on Grandma's chair, pushing the small of my back into the wooden slats, running my hands over the smooth, cold arms. I closed my eyes, imagining I was Grandma. My hands were her hands, soft and warm against the coolness of the wood. I opened my eyes, took the folded paper from my lap, and read the words out loud.

**'Magic chair. Magic chair.**

**Lift me up into the air.**

**Spin me round and then take flight.**

**Take me to the stars tonight.'**

I held onto the arms tightly, closing my eyes tightly too. The chair began to rock gently. I held on even tighter. I felt the chair arms move under my hand. I let go and opened my eyes. The curled ends of the arms were turning into hands that slid around me and clasped together, holding me firm. I wanted to scream for Mum but the chair started to lift off the ground and spin around. Faster and faster. It was going so fast, I couldn't see anything except swirling lines, like I was in the middle of a tornado. Up and up we went, spinning and spinning and spinning. I must have passed out but when I came to, everything was still, dark, and so... so quiet. The hands had changed back to curls and my hands were holding on to them.

When I looked around me, I could see nothing but the moon and millions of stars twinkling and blinking in the black sky.

I looked down at the floor to what looked like dry, grey dust as far as the eye could see.

'Where am I?' I said out loud to no one in particular as there was no one in particular to hear me.

'On a star,' said a manly voice.

My head whipped round to where the voice came from but there was no one there. Squinting, I tried to see beyond the chair and out into the dark.

'I'm here,' said the voice. It was the chair speaking.

'I didn't know that you could speak,' I said to the chair. 'Grandma never said that you could speak in her letter.'

'Of course chairs can't speak. Look behind the chair.' The voice sounded a bit cross. I walked around the chair and peered down to see the tiniest man I had ever seen.

'Obviously your first trip,' he said, eyeing me up and down.

'Yes. I..I'm Molly,' I said, holding my hand out to be polite.

The little man looked up at me and shrugged. 'And how do you expect me to shake hands with you? You're far too big. I remember Hannah doing the same when she first came. Must be an earthly thing.' He turned and started to walk away. 'Well, come along. I haven't got all night.'

674 words

## **Revision and Redrafting**

### 1) Cutting Material

This is the most important part of the process. It aims to make your work sharper and more honed. Developing a sense of what can be left out will turn your work into a polished piece.

1. Have you wasted time explaining when you could be showing rather than telling?
2. Have you overloaded your piece with description?
3. Have you repeated yourself, repeated words or said the same thing using different words?
4. Have you kept the descriptive commenting on dialogue to a minimum and restricted the attributions to *'said'* ?
5. could you delete the opening paragraph and start lower down?
6. What about the closing paragraph?

## Cutting down on repetition

Return to the free-writing piece and underline or highlight all repeated words other than 'and', 'the' and 'because'.

Grandma's chair was made of wood and rocked backwards and forwards. The back was tall and slatted, curving slightly to allow Grandma to sit comfortably. The wooden arms **curled** at the end. Grandma used the **curl** to grip to when she got out of it. The **seat** was brown leather, shiny but cracked with so many **bottoms** having sat on it. The leather **seat** cover was attached by a row of brass pins along the edge. A little of the horse-hair stuffing poked out of the depression where countless **bottoms** had stretched it until it split under the pressure.

My lovely Grandma was gone but had she had left me a small envelope which I had opened after I had gone to bed tonight. Mum had wanted me to open it earlier, but I said it was private between Grandma and me.

'Look,' I had said, showing her the writing on the front. ***ONLY TO BE OPENED BY MOLLY. PRIVATE!***

I tiptoed downstairs and into the living room when everyone had gone to bed. The moon was shining through the window, straight onto Grandma's **chair**, like it was showing me the way. I walked over to the **chair** slowly and, for the very first time, sat on Grandma's **chair**, pushing the small of my back into the wooden slats, running my hands over the smooth, cold arms. I closed **my eyes**, imagining I was Grandma. My hands were her hands, soft and warm against the coolness of the wood. I opened **my eyes**, took the folded paper from my lap, and read the words out loud.

**'Magic chair. Magic chair.**

**Lift me up into the air.**

**Spin me round and then take flight.**

**Take me to the stars tonight.'**

I held onto the **arms tightly**, closing **my eyes tightly** too. The chair began to rock gently. I held on even **tighter**. I felt the chair **arms** move under my hand. I let go and opened **my eyes**. The **curled ends of the arms** were turning into **hands** that slid around me and clasped together, holding me firm. I wanted to scream for Mum but the chair started to lift off the ground and spin around. **Faster and faster**. It was going so fast, I couldn't see anything except swirling lines, like I was in the middle of a tornado. Up and up we went, **spinning and spinning and spinning**. I must have passed out but when I came to, everything was still, dark, and so... so quiet. The **hands** had changed back to **curls** and my **hands** were holding on to them.

When I looked around me, I could see nothing but the moon and millions of stars twinkling and blinking in the black sky.

I looked down at the floor to what looked like dry, grey dust as far as the eye could see.

'Where am I?' I said out loud to no one in particular as there was no one in particular to hear me.

'On a star,' said a manly voice.

My head whipped round to where the voice came from but there was no one there. Squinting, I tried to see beyond the **chair** and out into the dark.

'I'm here, said the voice. It was the **chair** speaking.

'I didn't know that you could speak,' I said to the chair. 'Grandma never said that you could speak in her letter.'

'Of course chairs can't speak. Look behind the **chair**.' The voice sounded a bit cross. I walked around the **chair** and peered down to **see** the tiniest man I had ever **seen**.

'Obviously your first trip,' he said, eyeing me up and down.

'Yes. I..I'm Molly,' I said, holding my hand out to be polite.

The little man looked up at me and shrugged. 'And how do you expect me to shake hands with you? You're far too big. I remember Hannah doing the same when she first came. Must be an earthly thing.' He turned and started to walk away. 'Well, come along. I haven't got all night.'

674 words

### **Now cut them out altogether and ask yourself the following questions**

1. Are there any repeats you could change? If so use a thesaurus to help you find an alternative. If not, why not?
2. Are you deliberately using repetition for the sake of rhythm? Does this work?

Now try adding back one of the repeated words at a time. You should now see how many of them are necessary.

Grandma's chair was made of wood and rocked backwards and forwards. The back was tall and slatted, curving slightly to allow Grandma to sit comfortably. The wooden arms were

carved into a scroll at the end and Grandma used it to hold on to when she got out of it. The seat was covered in brown leather, shiny but cracked with so many people having sat on it. The cover was attached by a row of brass pins along the edge. A little of the horse-hair stuffing poked out of the depression where countless bottoms had stretched it until it had split under the pressure.

My lovely Grandma was gone but had she had left me a small envelope which I had opened after I had gone to bed tonight. Mum had wanted me to open it earlier, but I had told her it was private between Grandma and me.

'Look,' I had said, showing her the writing on the front.

***ONLY TO BE OPENED BY MOLLY. PRIVATE!***

I tiptoed downstairs and into the living room when everyone had gone to bed. The moon was shining through the window, straight onto Grandma's chair, like it was showing me the way. I walked over slowly and, for the very first time, sat down on it, pushing the small of my back into the wooden slats, running my hands over the smooth, cold arms. I closed my eyes, imagining I was Grandma. My hands were her hands, soft and warm against the coolness of the wood. I looked down and took the folded paper from my lap, and read the words out loud.

**'Magic chair. Magic chair.**

**Lift me up into the air.**

**Spin me round and then take flight.**

**Take me to the stars tonight.'**

I held onto the arms tightly. The chair began to rock gently. I held on even tighter. I felt the arms move under my grip. I let go as the scrolled ends turned into hands and slid around me, clasping together, holding me firm. I wanted to scream for Mum but the chair started to lift off the ground and spin around. Faster and faster. It was going so fast, I couldn't see anything except swirling lines, like I was in the middle of a tornado. Up and up we went, spinning and spinning and spinning. I must have passed out but when I came to, everything was still, dark, and so... so quiet. The hands had changed back to wood and I was holding on to them.

When I looked around me, I could see nothing but the moon and millions of stars twinkling and blinking in the black sky.

I looked down at the floor to what looked like dry, grey dust as far as the eye could see.

'Where am I?' I said out loud to no one in particular as there was no one in particular to hear me.

'On a star,' said a manly voice.

My head whipped round to where the voice came from but there was no one there. Squinting, I tried to see out into the darkness.

'I'm here, said the voice. It was the chair speaking.

'I didn't know that you could speak,' I said. 'Grandma never said that you could speak in her letter.'

'Of course chairs can't speak. Look behind it.' The voice sounded a bit cross. I walked around and peered down to at the tiniest man I had ever seen.

'Obviously your first trip,' he said, eyeing me up and down.

'Yes. I..I'm Molly,' I said, holding my hand out to be polite.

The little man looked up at me and shrugged. 'And how do you expect me to shake hands with you? You're far too big. I remember Hannah doing the same when she first came. Must be an earthly thing.' He turned and started to walk away. 'Well, come along. I haven't got all night.'

654 words after deleting or changing unnecessary words

Use this piece of writing for the basis of the next exercise.

### **Cutting down on adjectives and adverbs**

Underline all the adverbs and adjectives

Grandma's chair was made of wood and rocked backwards and forwards. The back was tall and slatted, curving **slightly** to allow Grandma to sit **comfortably**. The wooden arms were carved into a scroll at the end and Grandma used it to hold on to when she got out of it. The seat was covered in **brown** leather, **shiny** but cracked with so many people having sat on it. The cover was attached by a row of brass pins along the edge. A little of the horse-hair stuffing poked out of the depression where countless bottoms had stretched it until it had split under the pressure.

My **lovely** Grandma was gone but had she had left me a small envelope which I had opened after I had gone to bed tonight. Mum had wanted me to open it earlier, but I had told her it was private between Grandma and me.

'Look,' I had said, showing her the writing on the front.

***ONLY TO BE OPENED BY MOLLY. PRIVATE!***

I tiptoed downstairs and into the living room when everyone had gone to bed. The moon was shining through the window, straight onto Grandma's chair, like it was showing me the way. I walked over **slowly** and, for the very first time, sat down on it, pushing the small of my back into the wooden slats, running my hands over the **smooth, cold** arms. I closed my eyes, imagining I was Grandma. My hands were her hands, soft and warm against the coolness of the wood. I looked down and took the folded paper from my lap, and read the words out loud.

**'Magic chair. Magic chair.'**

**Lift me up into the air.**

**Spin me round and then take flight.**

**Take me to the stars tonight.'**

I held onto the arms **tightly**. The chair began to rock **gently**. I held on even tighter. I felt the arms move under my grip. I let go as the scrolled ends turned into hands and slid around me, clasping together, holding me firm. I wanted to scream for Mum but the chair started to lift off the ground and spin around. Faster and faster. It was going so fast, I couldn't see anything except swirling lines, like I was in the middle of a tornado. Up and up we went, spinning and spinning and spinning. I must have passed out but when I came to, everything was still, dark, and so... so quiet. The hands had changed back to wood and I was holding on to them.

When I looked around me, I could see nothing but the moon and millions of stars twinkling and blinking in the black sky.

I looked down at the floor to what looked like **dry, grey** dust as far as the eye could see.

'Where am I?' I said out loud to no one in particular as there was no one in particular to hear me.

'On a star,' said a **manly** voice.

My head whipped round to where the voice came from but there was no one there. Squinting, I tried to see out into the darkness.

'I'm here,' said the voice. It was the chair speaking.

'I didn't know that you could speak,' I said. 'Grandma never said that you could speak in her letter.'

'Of course chairs can't speak. Look behind it.' The voice sounded a bit cross. I walked around and peered down to at the tiniest man I had ever seen.

'Obviously your first trip,' he said, eyeing me up and down.

'Yes. I..I'm Molly,' I said, holding my hand out to be polite.

The little man looked up at me and shrugged. 'And how do you expect me to shake hands with you? You're far too big. I remember Hannah doing the same when she first came. Must be an earthly thing.' He turned and started to walk away. 'Well, come along. I haven't got all night.'

654 words

Now remove them all.

You should be able to do this without destroying the sense of your work.

Then put back only the adjectives and adverbs you feel to be totally necessary.

Grandma's chair was made of wood and rocked backwards and forwards. The back was tall and slatted, curving to allow Grandma to sit comfortably. The wooden arms were carved into scrolls at the end and Grandma used it to hold on to them when she got out of it. The seat was covered in brown leather, shiny and cracked through so many people having sat on it. The cover was attached by a row of brass pins along the edge. A little of the horse-hair stuffing poked out of the depression where countless bottoms had stretched it until it had split under the pressure.

My Grandma was gone but had she had left me a small envelope which I had opened after I had gone to bed tonight. Mum had wanted me to open it earlier, but I had told her it was private between Grandma and me.

'Look,' I had said, showing her the writing on the front.

***ONLY TO BE OPENED BY MOLLY. PRIVATE!***

I tiptoed downstairs and into the living room when everyone had gone to bed. The moon was shining through the window, straight onto Grandma's chair, like it was showing me the way. I walked over and, for the very first time, sat down on it, pushing the small of my back into the wooden slats, running my hands over the arms. I closed my eyes, imagining I was Grandma. My hands were her hands, soft and warm against the coolness of the wood. I looked down and took the folded paper from my lap, and read the words out loud.

**'Magic chair. Magic chair.'**



**Lift me up into the air.**

**Spin me round and then take flight.**

**Take me to the stars tonight.'**

I held onto the arms. The chair began to rock. I held on even tighter. I felt the arms move under my grip. I let go as the scrolled ends turned into hands and slid around me, clasping together, holding me firm. I wanted to scream for Mum but the chair started to lift of the ground and spin around. Faster and faster. It was going so fast, I couldn't see anything except swirling lines, like I was in the middle of a tornado. Up and up we went, spinning and spinning and spinning. I must have passed out but when I came to, everything was still, dark, and so... so quiet. The hands had changed back to wood and I was holding on to them.

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My head whipped round to where the voice came from but there was no one there. Squinting, I tried to see out into the darkness.

'I'm here, said the voice. It was the chair speaking.

'I didn't know that you could speak,' I said. 'Grandma never said that you could speak in her letter.'

'Of course chairs can't speak. Look behind it.' The voice sounded cross. I walked around and peered down to at the tiniest man I had ever seen.

'Obviously your first trip,' he said, eyeing me up and down.

'Yes. I..I'm Molly,' I said, holding my hand out to be polite.

The little man looked up at me and shrugged. 'And how do you expect me to shake hands with you? You're far too big. I remember Hannah doing the same when she first came. Must be an earthly thing.' He turned and started to walk away. 'Well, come along. I haven't got all night.'

644 words after removing unnecessary adjectives and adverbs.

## **Replacing or adding material**

Before adding anything, please bear these points in mind.

1. Does the new material contribute to the development of the plot?

If it contributes mainly to character development, back story, or setting, then consider NOT adding it. The reader will almost always understand more than you think.

2. Does the new material make the shape of your story more unwieldy? Try to stay focussed on your plot 'type' and shape.

e.g. fantasy, fairytale etc

## **Final piece after replacing, rearranging or adding material.**

Grandma's chair was made of wood and rocked backwards and forwards. The back was tall and slatted, curving to allow Grandma to sit in comfort. The wooden arms were carved into scrolls at the end and Grandma used them to hold on to when she got out of it. The seat was covered in brown leather, shiny and cracked through constant use. The cover was attached by a row of brass pins. A little of the horse-hair stuffing poked out of the depression where countless bottoms had stretched it until it had split under the pressure.

My Grandma was gone but had she had left me a small envelope which I had opened after I had gone to bed. Mum had wanted me to open it earlier, but I had told her it was between me and Grandma.

'Look,' I had said, showing her the writing on the front.

***ONLY TO BE OPENED BY MOLLY. PRIVATE!***

I tiptoed downstairs and into the living room when everyone had gone to bed. The moon was shining through the window, straight onto Grandma's chair, like it was showing me the way. I walked over and sat down on it, pushing the small of my back into the wooden slats, running my hands over the arms, imagining that I was Grandma. My hands were her hands, soft and warm against the coolness of the wood. I looked down and took the folded paper from my lap. Opening it, I read the words out loud.

**'Magic chair. Magic chair.**

**Lift me up into the air.**

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I held onto the arms. The chair began to rock. I held on even tighter. I felt the arms move under my grip. I let go as the scrolled ends turned into hands and slid around me, clasping together, holding me firm. I wanted to scream for Mum but the chair started to lift of the ground and spin around. Faster and faster. So fast, I couldn't see anything except swirling lines, as if I was in the middle of a tornado. Up and up we went, spinning and spinning and spinning. I must have passed out but when I came to, everything was still, dark, and so... so quiet. The hands had changed back to wood and I was holding on to them.

When I looked around me, I could see nothing but the moon and millions of stars twinkling and blinking in the black sky.

I looked down at the floor to what looked like dry, grey dust as far as the eye could see.

'Where am I?' I said out loud to no one in particular as there was no one in particular to hear me.

'On a star,' said a voice.

My head whipped round to where the voice came from but I couldn't see anyone.

'I'm here, said the voice. It was the chair speaking.

'I didn't know that you could speak,' I said. 'Grandma never said that you could speak in her letter.'

'Of course chairs can't speak. Look behind it.' The voice sounded cross. I walked around and peered down to at the tiniest man I had ever seen.

'Obviously your first trip,' he said, eyeing me up and down.

'Yes. I..I'm Molly,' I said, holding my hand out to be polite.

The little man looked up at me and shrugged. 'And how do you expect me to shake hands with you? You're far too big. I remember Hannah doing the same when she first came. Must be an earthly thing.' He turned and started to walk away. 'Well, come along. I haven't got all night.'

616 words after replacing, rearranging or adding material. Piece reduced from 674 words.

### **Rearranging material**

The two main reasons for rearranging material are to:

1. Organise the material in a more logical way.

## 2. Improve the suspense.

This is the point where a reader could be of great help to tell you as it seems to them. Please could you leave a comment to help me do that.