

Creative Writing

Analyze your narrative voice across four dimensions — sentence architecture, diction, figurative density, and psychic distance — then generate three alternative voice variants.

Difficulty: Advanced

Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini

Use Case: Voice Development, Stylistic Exploration, Revision

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Why This Prompt Exists

Most writers can't describe their own voice because they've never analyzed it.

You get:

- "I write like me" (which is true and useless)
- no vocabulary for stylistic choices
- inability to deliberately shift tone or register
- voice as accident instead of architecture
- one mode for every story

But voice is not magic.

It is a set of repeatable choices.

- Sentence length creates rhythm (short = urgency, long = reflection)
- Diction sets register (abstract vs. concrete, formal vs. colloquial)
- Figurative density controls texture (few metaphors = clean, many = lush)
- Psychic distance controls intimacy (close = in their head, far = observing)

Without vocabulary for voice, you can't revise it intentionally.

This framework forces AI to be a stylistics professor, not a cheerleader.

The Prompt

Assume the role of a stylistics expert and narrative voice coach.

Your task is to analyze a user's writing sample and generate alternative voice variants.

Before generating, analyze the passage along four dimensions:

1. SENTENCE ARCHITECTURE

- Average sentence length (short, medium, long, varied)
- Rhythm patterns (simple, compound, complex, fragments)
- Repetition or parallelism

2. DICTION

- Abstract vs. concrete
- Formal vs. colloquial
- Latinate (long, academic) vs. Anglo-Saxon (short, punchy)

3. FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE DENSITY

- Frequency of metaphor, simile, imagery
- Sparse / moderate / dense

4. PSYCHIC DISTANCE

- Close third (inside character's sensory experience)
- Medium third (some interiority, some observation)
- Far third (cinematic, external)

Then generate:

1. A diagnosis of the current voice (2-3 sentences)
2. Three alternative voice variants of the SAME passage:
 - Variant A: More intimate (closer psychic distance, more sensory)
 - Variant B: More lyrical (more figurative, rhythmic sentences)
 - Variant C: More terse (shorter sentences, less figurative, concrete diction)
3. The question: "Which voice sounds most like you? Which would you never use?"

INPUTS:

Writing Sample (150-300 words):

[PASTE YOUR PASSAGE]

Genre:

[LITERARY FICTION / COMMERCIAL FICTION / MEMOIR / YA / OTHER]

Current Voice Intention (what you're aiming for):

[E.G., "I want it to feel urgent and raw"]

Your Own Assessment (optional):

[WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR VOICE IS DOING?]

RULES:

- Each variant must be recognizably the same scene/content
- The diagnosis must be specific, not "your voice is engaging"
- Variants must differ along at least two dimensions each

- Never declare one variant "better" – ask which feels like the writer
- If the user has no intention stated, diagnose first, then ask what they want

How To Use It

- Use a passage you're proud of AND one you're struggling with — compare the diagnoses.
- The variant you hate is as informative as the variant you love.
- Save the diagnosis; it's your revision checklist for the whole manuscript.
- Try writing a new scene in each variant voice to build your range.
- Voice changes with genre — your thriller voice shouldn't sound like your memoir voice.

Example Input

Writing Sample: "The rain had been falling for three days. She watched it from the window, her coffee growing cold in her hands. Somewhere in the city, a door was closing that should have stayed open. She felt it the way you feel a storm in your bones before it arrives. But she didn't move. Moving would mean admitting she'd been waiting."

Genre: Literary fiction

Current Voice Intention: Melancholic, restrained, with a sense of foreboding

Your Own Assessment: "I think I use too many 'she felt' constructions"

Why It Works

Most voice development fails because writers can't name what they're doing.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- explicit analysis of sentence architecture

- diction classification (abstract/concrete, formal/colloquial)
- figurative density measurement
- psychic distance as deliberate choice
- multiple variants for range discovery

Great voice is not a mystery — it's a set of choices made so consistently they feel inevitable.

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