

One Question One Weekend • Brief 5

# Short Story Weekend

Your mission: write a 500-word short story with help from AI. Any genre. Your choices. Your edit. Your story.

## The question

**This weekend: write a short story with help from AI. 500 words. Any genre.**

Writing with AI is different from writing alone. You will see where AI goes generic. You will see where your instincts are sharper. That gap is the learning.

## 1 **Pick your story ingredients**

AI can draft. You choose the world.

Before opening AI, choose three things. This stops AI from giving you the most average story on Earth.

### **Genre**

Mystery, comedy, sci-fi, sports, school drama, horror-but-not-too-much, anything.

### **Main character**

A student in Mumbai. Give them one problem, wish, secret, or weird situation.

### **Setting**

A school corridor, local train, apartment lift, monsoon street, tuition class, cricket ground.

### **Genre**

Example: mystery

### **Main character + what happens**

Example: a student in Mumbai who finds a strange note in their maths textbook

### Setting or extra detail

Example: during a rainy school day

#### THOUGHT BULB

AI writes better when you give it sharp ingredients. “Write a story” is weak. “Write a mystery about a student in Mumbai who finds a strange note in a textbook” is already a movie trailer.

☐ I chose my genre, main character, and setting.

## 2 Open your writing partner

Use ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or another AI tool your school allows.

ChatGPT is the primary tool for this brief. Claude also works well. Gemini is fine too. Do not spend the whole weekend comparing tools. Pick one and start.

#### GAME RULE

AI gets the first draft. You get the final cut. The director is not the camera. You are not the copy machine.

☐ I opened ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or another allowed AI tool.

### 3 Copy the starter prompt

This prompt keeps creative control with you.

#### STARTER PROMPT

Help me write a 500-word short story. Genre: [you choose]. Main character: a student in Mumbai who [something interesting happens]. Give me a first draft.

Or use your filled-in version:

#### YOUR CUSTOM PROMPT

Help me write a 500-word short story. Genre: [you choose]. Main character: a student in Mumbai who [something interesting happens]. Setting/detail: [optional detail]. Give me a first draft.

#### CAUTION BOARD

Do not ask AI to “make it perfect.” Perfect usually means bland. Ask for a draft. Drafts are meant to be changed.

☐

I pasted the prompt and got a first draft.

## 4 Do not accept the first draft

The first draft is the clay. Now you shape it.

Read the AI draft once. Do not start correcting commas yet. First, look for the parts that feel fake, boring, or not like something you would write.

#### AI-ish line

“Rohan felt a mixture of curiosity and fear as he embarked on his journey.”

#### More human line

“Rohan put the note in his pocket and pretended his hands were not shaking.”

#### THOUGHT BULB

AI often tells emotions. Good stories show them. “She was scared” is okay. “She checked the door lock twice” is better.

☐ I found at least one line that sounded too generic.

## 5 Ask AI for help, not control

If the draft is stuck, use AI like a writing partner.

You can ask AI to suggest options. But you choose what stays. That is the whole point.

#### EDITING HELP PROMPT

Here is my short story draft: [paste draft]. Suggest 5 specific improvements. Do not rewrite the whole story. Tell me which lines feel generic, where the story slows down, and where I can add one detail only I would know.

#### BOSS FIGHT: THE GENERIC MONSTER

Remove or rewrite three boring phrases. Examples: “suddenly,” “little did he know,” “heart was racing,” “journey,” “filled with emotions.”

☐ I edited the AI draft and made it sound more like mine.

## 6 **If you get stuck, shrink the mission**

500 words is the target. 200 words is still a real start.

Stuck does not mean failed. It means the story is asking for a smaller door.

### **IF YOU GET STUCK**

Start with 200 words instead. The length is not the point. The story is.

☐ I know my backup plan: 200 words first, then expand later.

## 7 **Make the One Weekend brief**

This is the page/card version of your project.

A One Question One Weekend brief is not a full lesson. It is a clean invitation to make something.

### **QUESTION**

**This weekend: write a short story with help from AI. 500 words. Any genre.**

### **WHY THIS WEEKEND**

Writing with AI is different from writing alone. You will see where AI goes generic. You will see where your instincts are sharper. That gap is the learning.

### **WHAT TO MAKE**

A 500-word short story. You choose the genre, main character, setting, and final edit. AI gives you a first draft. You make it yours.

### **TOOL + PROMPT**

**Tool:** ChatGPT free. Alternative: Claude free.

**Prompt:** Help me write a 500-word short story. Genre: [you choose]. Main character: a student in Mumbai who [something interesting happens]. Give me a first draft.

**IF YOU GET STUCK**

Start with 200 words instead. Keep your draft. Then, if you feel like it, read it to someone at home, send it to a friend, or show your teacher, and ask what they would change. Up to you.

☐ I kept my draft and can turn it into a simple weekend brief.

# Mission complete

No submission here. Vanguard Scholar does not collect your story. Keep it with you.