SHOWING VS. TELLING

Instructions:
1. Identify which sentences/paragraphs below are showing (write “show”) and which are telling (write “tell”).
2. Next, for the ones you’ve identified as showing, decide which of the techniques below the writer used, then write that letter next to the sentence/paragraph.

Techniques writers can use to avoid telling the reader:
A. Using dialogue
B. Using all the senses
C. Using picture nouns and action verbs
D. Writing in scenes

__________ Valek was angry.

__________ Valek took a gray rock off his desk and hurled it toward me. Stunned, I froze as the stone whizzed past and exploded on the wall behind me.

__________ My brother modifies sports car engines, competes in ballroom dance tournaments, and analyzes chess algorithms.

__________ My brother is talented.

__________ The brown-eyed little girl wore a plastic Viking cap, and her mouth was sticky from candy. Standing there in her dress-up clothes, she looked more tired than I had ever seen a child look. But she was so very stubborn, I saw we were headed for a battle.

__________ The little girl looked so tired, she clearly needed a nap.

__________ If I live for a thousand years, I’ll never forget how utterly and terribly alone I felt after Fido died. Months and months went by, and it seemed that every little thing reminded me of him. I don’t know whether I am ever going to get over his death. Whenever puppies in the pet store window distracted me from our walk, Fido flattened his scruffy ears, growling. But he always forgave me. As his sight faded, the smell of fresh air and the feel of grass would make him try to caper. Eventually, at the sound of my voice, his tail thumped weakly on the ground. This morning, I filled his water bowl all the way to the top–just the way he likes it–before I remembered.

__________ I’ll never forget how I felt after Fido died. I was miserable.

__________ I like many different sports, from skiing to rock-climbing, but when it comes right down to it, I would have to say that ping-pong is my favorite sport.

__________ Ping-pong may look like a relaxing pastime, but for experts, winning the game requires manual dexterity, agility, and endurance. He’s drenched in sweat, his knuckles are white, he’s on the other side of the ping-pong table, and I’m about to bring him down.

__________ The temperature had fallen overnight and the heavy frost reflected the sun’s rays brightly.

__________ The morning air was bitter ice in her nose and mouth, and dazzling frost lay on every bud and branch.
A saw and hammer dangled from his belt and an adze was hooked into it, one thumbnail was black, and when he bowed she saw several long wood-shavings caught in his curly hair.

The taller man was a carpenter, complete with the tools of his trade.

Aurelio felt scared.

Aurelio’s face went ashen. His breathing came in ragged gasps.

“Let’s go!” Karina snapped.

“Let’s go,” Karina said impatiently.
SHOWING VS. TELLING

Techniques a writer can use to avoid telling the reader:
E. Using dialogue
F. Using all the senses
G. Using picture nouns and action verbs
H. Writing in scenes

Instructions:
- Identify which sentences/paragraphs are showing (write “show”) and which are telling (write “tell”).
- Next, for the ones you’ve identified as showing, decide which of the techniques above the writer used, then write that number next to the sentence/paragraph.