

How would
you describe
the individual
in the picture?





Descriptive Essays

*Orientation Communication Skills
English Language Teaching Unit (2021)*



What is a descriptive essay?

'Painting a picture with words'



"Description is what makes the reader a sensory participant in the story."



–Stephen King

Use the “*Show Don’t Tell*” approach in your descriptive essay by asking these questions about the 5 senses:

1. What did you see?
2. What did you hear?
3. What did you touch?
4. What did you smell?
5. What did you taste?



*You probably won't have answers to all these questions. But include “Show Don't Tell” content wherever you can in your essay.

"Show Don't Tell"



"The poodle snarled and growled." vs. *"The poodle was angry and fierce."*

Which sentence is an example for 'show'?

- In the example above, the first sentence shows that the black poodle was angry because it snarled and growled.
- The second sentence says or tells us that the dog was angry and fierce.



Let's read a description!

Charlie bucket stared around the gigantic room in which he now found himself. the place was like a witch's kitchen! all about him black metal pots were boiling and bubbling on huge stoves, and kettles were hissing, and pans were sizzling, and strange iron machines were clanking and spluttering, and there were pipes running all over the ceiling and walls, and the whole place was filled with smoke and steam and delicious rich smells.

(Charlie and the Chocolate Factory : Roald Dahl)

What can you see, hear, touch, smell, and taste in your mind when you read this description?



Features of Descriptive Writing

Includes sensory details



It evokes sights, smells, sounds, textures and tastes in the reader in order to create a rich experience



Uses vivid language instead of vague/general terms



Uses figurative language (similes, metaphors, personification etc.)



Can be incorporated into narrative, expository and persuasive writing



Use of figurative language



THE SKY WEPT INCESSANTLY.
(PERSONIFICATION)



THE ROAD WAS A RIBBON OF
MOONLIGHT
(METAPHOR)



YOU NEED TO LOSE YOURSELF
TO FIND YOURSELF
(PARADOX)

VIVID VS GENERAL LANGUAGE



The food was unpalatable

The roast chicken tasted like over spiced charcoal and the green vegetables could hardly be called green as they were bathed in a yellowish gooey dressing.





Writing Tips

- ✓ Choose the topic
- ✓ Preplanning
- ✓ Create an outline
- ✓ Edit and revise



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Group Activity

- ✓ Individually or in groups, write a descriptive paragraph on the topic given to you by your lecturer.
- ✓ Type the essays on a padlet and exchange your ideas about each essay.

<https://padlet.com/sucherudissanayake/5tpg62uh3j83f3qr>





Here are some topics for you...

- ✓ Describe a place you loved visiting as a child
- ✓ Describe an inspiring friend or family member
- ✓ Describe a beautiful location in nature
- ✓ Describe a haunted or spooky place
- ✓ Describe a first-time experience
- ✓ Describe a hike/special walk/trip you took
- ✓ Describe a happy memory
- ✓ Describe a shocking/sad experience
- ✓ Describe a lucky object/a piece of art
- ✓ Describe a person you envied or a strange person you've met

References

Davis, S. *12 Descriptive essay prompts.*

<https://www.academicwritingsuccess.com/12-descriptive-essay-prompts-and-how-to-write-about-them/>

Descriptive Essay Examples and Writing Tips.

<https://www.myperfectwords.com/blog/descriptive-essay/descriptive-essay-examples>

