

**DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY WRITING**

**Definition:** It is a type of writing that creates a clear and vivid impression of the topic. Description translates your experience of a person, place or thing into words, often by appealing the physical senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch.

**A good description**

- ✓ creates a main point (an overall effect, feeling or image) about the topic
- ✓ uses concrete and specific details to support the main point
- ✓ uses details that appeal to the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch.

**Some Important Aspects:**

Most of the description of the topic is in the supporting points. A good description uses specific details that appeal to all five senses of the reader through relevant details, prepositions and similes. In descriptive writing, you *show* your readers what you mean, not just *tell* them.

**i. Prepositions/Prepositional Phrases:**

Prepositional phrases are made up of a **preposition + a noun phrase/a pronoun**.

Prepositional phrases are important in descriptive writing. They show the position, location and direction of objects in space and time. We can also use prepositional phrases to show manner and attitudes.

**Position and Location:**

The boat slowly sank **with the water level**.

**Direction:**

The idea was to float the boat **over the fence wall**.

**Time:**

I wake up **at six in the morning**. She has an exam **on Sunday**.

**Manner and Attitudes:**

He pulled back **in horror**.

**Task 01:** Identify PP in the following sentences:

The boat settled on dry ground.

We could walk around the park.

In the morning, I will to the school.

**ii. Adding Details:**

Details tell what it looks like and how it sounds, feels, smells or tastes. You can use nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs to add details. The more specific the details are the more interesting and effective the writing will be. Clear details allow the readers to build a picture in his or her mind of what is being described.

**Task:** Compare the general statements below with the specific ones.

**General Statements**

The crabs were good.

He bought some fruits.

She walked to the door.

He bought a vegetable.

### Sentences with Specific Details

The crabs were tender and sweet with a salty taste.

He bought some sweet and juicy strawberries.

She tiptoed to the door/

She walked quickly and silently to the door.

### iii. Adding Adjectives

Order of Adjective

Adjectives appear in a particular order within a sentence, according to their function, as shown below:

Examples	Interesting	Huge	Old	Round	Blue	Mexican	Wooden	Picnic
	Boring	Small	New	Square	White	European	Iron	Wedding

**E.g.** We put out **huge** plates of **Mexican** food out on the **wooden picnic** table.

My mother had a **beautiful, small, antique, pearl** necklace.

They bought **gold wedding** rings.

### Task 02: Re-write the following sentences placing the adjectives in the correct order.

1. It was a (metal, new, fantastic) sculpture.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. They walked down the (old, elegant, marble) staircase.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. The museum has (wooden, entrance, beautiful ) doors.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. There were (blue, huge, bright) lights to mark the entrance.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. The food was served in (simple, tiny) portions in (small, dinner, modern) plates.  
\_\_\_\_\_

### iv. Similes:

Descriptive writing may use similes to make something seem more familiar and more creative. Similes make ideas easier to understand and they can also express feelings.

- A simile can be formed by using the preposition **like + noun/noun phrase**.  
e.g. The stars look like diamonds.
- A simile can also be formed by using the preposition **as + noun/noun phrase**.

e.g. He is **as** clever **as** a fox.

**Task 03: Match the first half of each sentence with the other to identify appropriate similes.**

- |                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| _____ 1. The house        | a. smelled sweet like honey  |
| _____ 2. The ocean        | b. is as solid as a rock.    |
| _____ 3. The cold wind    | c. sparkles like a diamond.  |
| _____ 4. Their friendship | d. was as fast as a bullet.  |
| _____ 5. The train        | e. cut sharply like a knife. |
| _____ 6. The air          | f. was as huge as a castle.  |

Descriptive Writing usually describes a person, a place or a thing.

Describing a Person:

## Adjectives to use

- interesting, shy, diffident, pushing, overbearing , talented, lonely, sociable, likeable, a pest, intelligent, introvert, extrovert, approachable, unapproachable, businesslike, humble, timid, practical, impractical, a good mixer, a good conversationalist, anti-social, retiring, a sport, a snob, a bore, a know-all, difficult, arrogant, shrewd energetic, conceited, modest, brash, self-confident, lazy, ambitious, easy-going, strict, cunning.

While  
person in descriptive writing the following sequence of information will be followed:

describing a

1. Physical appearance
2. Personality/character
3. Attitudes/behavior
4. Interests/hobbies/profession
5. Your personal impression/opinion

Describing a Place

## Adjectives for Places

- remote, imposing, superb, easily accessible,

When describing places in descriptive writing, the following sequence of information will be followed.

1. Location
2. Physical characteristics/Atmosphere
3. Special Attractions
4. The culture of the people in the place
5. Historical details
6. Your personal expressions and opinions

### **Describing Objects**

When describing objects you may want to include:

Colour

Shape

Size

Texture

### **Task:**

**Note: Write an essay on any ONE of the following topics in class and essays on rest of the three topics will be placed in your portfolio.**

1. Give a tour of one room in your house by describing the most important objects in that room.
2. Choose your favourite food: then, write a description of it that includes the way it looks, smells and tastes.
3. Describe one of your favorite outfits.
4. Describe what the first house on the moon would look like.