



Descriptive Writing

Adjectives and Adverbs

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Descriptive Writing: Adjectives and Adverbs

Descriptiveness is essential to good writing. This four-page worksheet begins with a clear discussion of descriptive writing and the use of adjectives, followed by an exercise requiring students to insert adjectives from a given list into various sentences. It goes on to discuss the use of adverbs, followed by examples and various tasks involving the use of different types of adverbs and the flexibility of their placement within sentences. The variety and comprehensiveness of the explanations, examples, and exercises provide students with enough practice to send them on their way toward using adjectives and adverbs to significantly increase the descriptiveness of their writing!

Name _____

Date _____

Descriptive Writing: Using Adjectives and Adverbs

When you write, it's important to be descriptive. Descriptive stories, summaries, analyses, and persuasive essays are more interesting, thereby holding your reader's attention, and provide a clearer picture for your reader.

Using adjectives is a great way to be descriptive. Adjectives describe nouns and give a much more interesting and specific "picture" of people, places, animals, things, events, and concepts. Compare the two tables below:

a table

an old, worn-out, giant wooden table

Directions: Choose one or two of the following adjectives and fit them into each sentence below.

beautiful	ugly	sweet	sour	old	new
broken	shiny	tall	short	fast	slow
square	smooth	clear	interesting	boring	sharp
funny	terrible	fresh	sleek	sad	peculiar
relaxing	nutty	shy	tiny	gentle	scary

- 1) All my friends gathered at the park on the weekend.
- 2) His sister arrived at the airport after her vacation at the beach.
- 3) I like to eat ice cream when I do my homework.
- 4) Henry took the train from his house in the suburbs into the city.
- 5) The squirrel finally found the nut he had buried in the backyard.
- 6) My teacher taught us all about the War of 1812.
- 7) Her coworker read the book throughout the morning.
- 8) The girl in the sandbox played with toys yesterday afternoon.
- 9) People always surround that water fountain near the receptionist.
- 10) In July the cheetah cubs learned how to hunt their prey.

Using adverbs is another great way to be descriptive. Adverbs can describe adjectives or other adverbs, but most often they are used to describe verbs. They can answer the question of how something is done.

Examples: How does Sally swim?

She swims quickly.

How does Tom respond to emails?

He responds to emails efficiently.

Note: *Adverbs that describe verbs frequently end in “ly”, but not always.*

Also: *Adverbs can be placed in different spots in a sentence without changing the meaning of the sentence.*

Example: The boy hesitantly approached the desk.

The boy approached the desk hesitantly.

Directions: Choose adverbs from the following list and fit one into each sentence below to describe the verbs.

quickly	slowly	easily	severely	excitedly	hesitantly
rudely	kindly	sweetly	sadly	happily	angrily
patiently	impatiently	carefully	cautiously	recklessly	confidently
reluctantly	secretly	loudly	quietly	proudly	seriously
well	better	further	more	less	sometimes

- 1) All my friends gathered at the park on the weekend.
- 2) His sister arrived at the airport after her vacation at the beach.
- 3) Anthony hid his mother’s birthday present under his bed.
- 4) Her coworker read the last few pages of her beloved novel late at night.
- 5) Mark worked in the seafood department of the local store.
- 6) Brittany left Pennsylvania to be closer to her family.
- 7) Skeeter ran after the mouse that showed up in our kitchen.
- 8) The teacher worked all weekend on his lesson plans.

There are many adverbs that describe how often an action occurs. Using these adverbs is another way to be more specific, thereby providing your reader with a more detailed description.

Directions: Choose adverbs from the following list and fit one into each sentence below to give your reader an idea of the frequency of an action.

incessantly	frequently	always	usually	often	regularly
sometimes	rarely	never	infrequently	occasionally	
once in a blue moon		at the drop of a hat		hardly ever	seldom

- 1) I like to eat ice cream when I do my homework.
- 2) My brother-in-law travels to Alaska in the summer to go fishing.
- 3) Jessie reads historical fiction.
- 4) The health department checks on every school in the five boroughs.
- 5) Bad things happen to good people.
- 6) In New York people are packed like sardines into subway cars.
- 7) My family watches Bob's Burgers together.
- 8) I love to walk through the haunted houses at amusement parks.
- 9) In the winter my friend Ryan and I go ice-skating at our local pond.
- 10) Henry hates to go on long car trips because he gets carsick.

Directions: Now write your own sentence using the following frequency adverbs.

- 1) (occasionally) _____

- 2) (never) _____

- 3) (rarely) _____

- 4) (frequently) _____

- 5) (incessantly) _____

Directions: After circling the frequency adverb, say the following sentences out loud, moving the adverb to a different place in the sentence.

- 1) Occasionally my little sister is able to hold her breath underwater.
- 2) Time can often heal a broken heart.
- 3) My mom can usually bring out the best in me.
- 4) Thomas, who sits next to me in math class, incessantly smacks his gum.
- 5) Frequently, I find my mind wandering during sociology class.
- 6) He never can see the forest for the trees.
- 7) The Supreme Court often makes controversial decisions.
- 8) I will rarely discover that my brother was intentionally being unkind.
- 9) Sometimes Susan spends more money at the mall than she meant to.
- 10) Once in a blue moon I'll indulge in an ice cream sundae.