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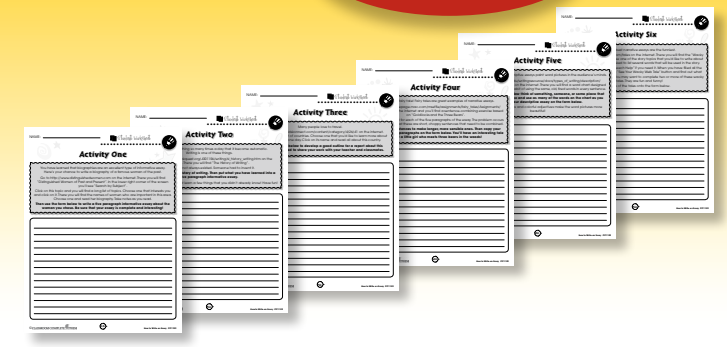


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What is a Descriptive Essay?

1. Put an X in front of the descriptive essay prompts.

- a) Your neighbor has some very strange pets. One day he asks you to babysit his pet raccoon. Write a story about the adventures of babysitting this lovable animal.
- b) Many television shows are devoted to helping people envision a dream home. Imagine one of these shows has agreed to build your dream home. In a letter, describe your dream home to the show's producers so they will build exactly the home you want.
- c) Inventions are all around us. Think of an invention that has been especially helpful or harmful to people. Write an essay that explains why.
- d) Think of a place that you can remember clearly and that is important to you. Think of the sights, sounds, and smells that come rushing back into your memory. Use words to paint a picture of this place that would make a reader feel as if he or she were right there.
- e) Accidents can happen to anyone. Imagine that you and a friend were playing pitch on the school yard. When you throw your fastball your friend misses the catch and the ball breaks the window of the principal's office! Write an accident report essay describing what happened, how it happened, and who was involved in the accident.

2. Describing Words: Adjectives describe nouns (people, places, or things) by answering one of these three questions: **What kind is it? How many are there? Which one is it?** Descriptive essays are more interesting when an assortment of adjectives is used in them. Circle at least one adjective in each sentence below and tell which of the three questions it answers.

- a) She is my favorite cousin. _____
- b) The famous chef served our meal. _____
- c) Kittens and cats make excellent pets. _____
- d) I like to listen to loud music. _____
- e) The little girl is my sister. _____



What is a Descriptive Essay?

A **descriptive essay** is an essay whose purpose is to describe or portray something, someone, or some place with enough detail to help the reader create a mental picture of it. **When you write a descriptive essay, your job is to paint a mental picture of the person, place, or thing for your readers.**

There are two kinds of descriptive essays. The first kind is an **objective essay**. In an objective descriptive essay the writer describes objects, as any person would see them – color, shape, length, height, width, weight, etc. Objective essays do not contain any of the writer's likes or dislikes or feelings about the object being described. A good example of an objective descriptive essay is a Police Report of an Accident. The policeman does not say whether or not one of the cars is his/her favorite color or whether or not the accident happened in front of the best skateboard store in town. These are personal likes and dislikes. The second kind of descriptive essay is an **impressionistic or subjective essay**. These kinds of essays describe objects and people as the writer sees them. They rely on the writer's five senses to paint a picture in the reader's mind.

The first step in prewriting for a good descriptive essay is planning. Your planning should include: 1. choosing a topic (if you are given a choice); 2. gathering information about the topic; and 3. using a graphic organizer to map out the structure of the descriptive essay.

There are several types of graphic organizers suitable for descriptive essays. A **Five Senses Graphic Organizer** is an excellent one during your prewriting work on a descriptive essay. You can record how an object or event affected your own five senses. Another good organizer for descriptive essays is a **Spider Map Graphic Organizer**. On it, you write the main topic of the essay on the body of the spider and supporting details on each of the spider's eight legs.

It is very important to remember that descriptive essays should contain colorful language. Try to use as many adjectives as you can in your essay. Descriptive essays do not tell a story, convince someone to think a certain way, or present a report about something. **In a descriptive essay, your purpose is to describe as many characteristics of a person, place, thing, or feeling as you can.**

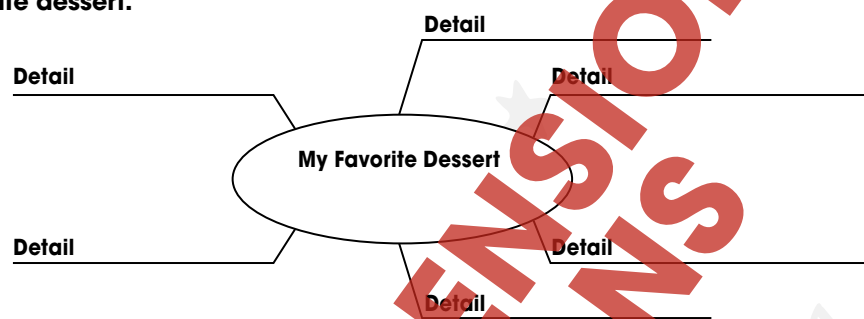


The Writing Watch Dog says,
"Great descriptive essays use detailed observations and descriptions to project complete pictures into the minds of your audience."



What is a Descriptive Essay?

1. Complete the following Spider Map Organizer for a descriptive essay about your favorite dessert.



2. Complete each statement

- a) The purpose of a descriptive essay is to _____.
- b) The two types of descriptive essays are _____ and _____.
- c) Descriptive essays should contain a great deal of colorful _____.
- d) The first step of any prewriting process should be _____.
- e) When you write a descriptive essay, your job is to paint a _____ of the topic.
- f) A good graphic organizer to use for a descriptive essay is a _____ Map.

Things to Remember When You Write a Descriptive Essay about an event:

Think of an event that you want to describe.

- Why is this particular event important?
- What were you doing?
- What other things were happening around you? Is there anything specific that stands out in your mind?
- Where were objects located in relation to where you were?
- How did the surroundings remind you of other places you have been?
- What sights, smells, sounds, and tastes were in the air?
- Did the sights, smells, sounds, and tastes remind you of anything?
- What were you feeling at that time?
- Has there been a time in which you have felt this way before?
- What do you want the reader to feel after reading the paper?
- What types of words and images can convey this feeling?
- Can you think of another situation that was similar to the one you are writing about? How can it help explain what you are writing about?
- Is there enough detail in your essay to create a mental image for the reader?



Writing a Descriptive Essay

1. Use the descriptive essay prompt, "My Favorite Hobby" and write a topic sentence, two or three supporting sentences, and a summary sentence for each paragraph on the Essay Map below.

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH # 1

Topic Sentence
Thesis Statement

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH # 2

Topic Sentence

Support Support Support Support

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH # 3

Topic Sentence

Support Support Support Support

INTRODUCTION PARAGRAPH # 4

Topic Sentence

Support Support Support Support

CONCLUSION PARAGRAPH # 5

Topic Sentence

Support Support Support Support



Writing Task #3

Think about where people live. People live in small towns, large towns, or even big cities. Some people live on farms or in houses in the country. Think about where it is best to live and why. **Choose the one place where you would like to live and write a persuasive essay giving reasons why you think it is the best.**

Blank lined writing area for the persuasive essay.



Writing Task #4

Each year millions of tourists visit Florida. Before you begin writing, think about Florida as a place to go on vacation. **Now write to explain why Florida is a popular place to go on vacation.**

Blank lined writing area for the explanatory essay.



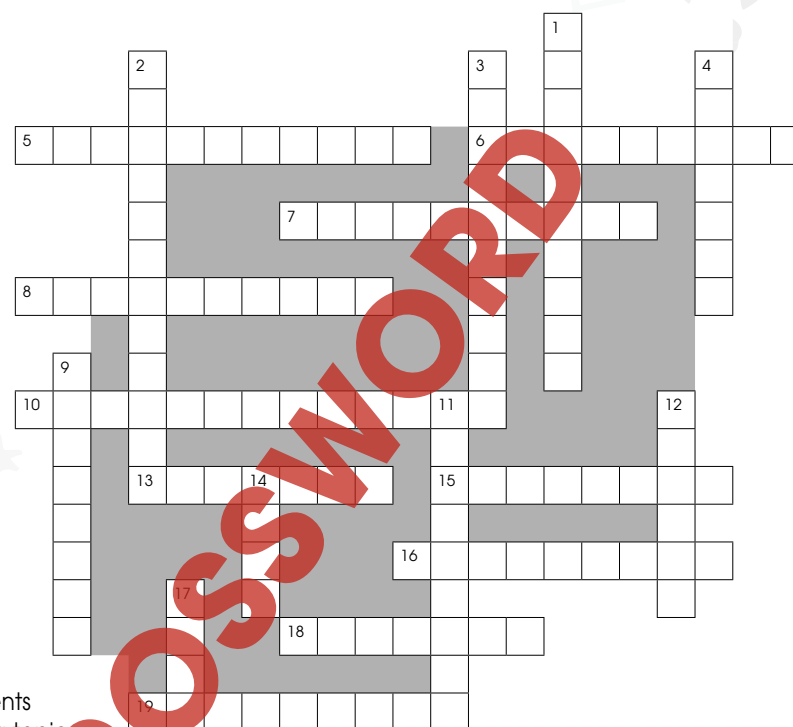
After You Read

NAME: _____

Crossword

Word List

- adjectives
- biography
- brainstorming
- drafting
- expository
- graphic
- informative
- narrative
- objective
- outline
- paragraph
- prewriting
- prompt
- proofreading
- pros
- publishing
- reports
- revision
- verb



Across

- An essay that presents information about a topic
- A type of informative essay
- The first steps in the writing process
- Words that describe nouns
- A way of coming up with ideas by recording your words and thoughts
- _____ organizers
- The third step in the writing process
- A collection of sentences about the same main topic
- A plan for writing is an _____
- A type of descriptive essay

Down

- Another name for an informative essay
- The fourth step in the writing process
- The fifth step in the writing process
- Book _____
- The second step in the writing process
- An essay that tells a story
- A suggested topic for an essay or story
- _____ and cons
- A part of speech that shows action or state-of-being



After You Read

NAME: _____

Comprehension Quiz

32

7

1. In complete sentences, describe how a paragraph and an essay are related.

2. In complete sentences, describe the parts of an essay.

3. List the five steps in the writing process.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

4. Circle the word True if the statement is true. Circle the word False if it's false.

- A paragraph is a collection of sentences about the same topic.
True False
- Brainstorming is part of the drafting step in writing.
True False
- Prompts are suggested topics for essays.
True False
- A sensory chart is a graphic organizer that lists all the steps in a process in the order they happened.
True False
- A persuasive essay is one that describes something.
True False
- A sequence chart lists the details of the sights, tastes, smells, touches, and sounds of a topic.
True False
- The purpose of an informative essay is to show, tell, or review.
True False

7

Gathering Grid

A gathering grid can help you organize information for a research report.

- Write your questions in the left hand column
- Write the title of your sources at the top of each column
- Write answers you find and note where you found them

Topic	Source 1	Source 2	Source 3
Question 1			
Question 2			
Question 3			



Prewriting and Graphic Organizers

Put the letter of the correct term beside the correct meaning:

- | | | | | |
|----------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|-----------|
| A | prewriting | <input type="checkbox"/> | a graphic organizer that identifies who, what where, when, and why | 1 |
| B | brainstorming | <input type="checkbox"/> | an essay that tells a story | 2 |
| C | graphic organizer | <input type="checkbox"/> | a graphic organizer that lists events in the order they occurred | 3 |
| D | 5 W's Chart | <input type="checkbox"/> | a way of coming up with ideas by recording your words and thoughts. | 4 |
| E | Venn Diagrams | <input type="checkbox"/> | an essay whose purpose is to present information to the reader | 5 |
| F | cause/effect charts | <input type="checkbox"/> | diagrams or drawings which help organize a writer's ideas | 6 |
| G | sequence charts | <input type="checkbox"/> | an essay whose purpose is to convince people to agree with the writer about a specific issue. | 7 |
| H | sensory chart | <input type="checkbox"/> | a graphic organizer that lists the details of the sights, tastes, smells, touches, and sounds of a topic | 8 |
| I | informative essay | <input type="checkbox"/> | the first step in the writing process in which you prepare to write by talking, thinking, and reading about possible writing topics. | 9 |
| J | persuasive essay | <input type="checkbox"/> | graphic organizer often used to compare the likenesses and differences of two or more subjects. | 10 |
| K | narrative essay | <input type="checkbox"/> | a graphic organizer that shows the relationship between two events or conditions when one makes the other happen. | 11 |

EASY MARKING ANSWER KEY

- 1** **D**
- 2** **K**
- 3** **G**
- 4** **B**
- 5** **I**
- 6** **C**
- 7** **J**
- 8** **H**
- 9** **A**
- 10** **E**
- 11** **F**

- 1.**
to tell a story
- 2.**
persuasive
- 3.**
to present information about the topic
- 4.**
descriptive

- 1.** Chronological Order Chart
- 2.** Order of Importance
- 3.** Informal Outline

- 1.**
- a)** chronological outline
- b)** drafting
- c)** order of importance ladder
- d)** informal outline
- e)** rough draft
- f)** purpose
- 2.**
accept any reasonable answer
- 3.** Informal Outline