

Picture This

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Riverlawn Elementary , Radford, VA

Grades: 3-5

Time Allotment

2 days - 45 minute Lessons

Overview

Topic: Descriptive Writing. The purpose of this lesson is to teach students to write descriptive paragraphs using specific adjectives and sensory words to create a picture in the reader's mind. Through a variety of writing activities to develop skills in descriptive writing, students will be led through the writing process to write a descriptive paragraph describing an original drawing of a monster.

Subject Matter

Language Arts/Art: Descriptive Writing

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to:

- understand and apply the steps of the writing process
- identify and list adjectives and sensory words to describe a picture
- incorporate adjectives, sensory words, and descriptive phrases into a descriptive paragraph and/or poem
- communicate effectively using available technology

Standards

The objectives listed may be used in part to address the following Virginia Standards of Learning: Virginia Department of Education:

<http://www.pen.k12.va.us/go/Sols/home.shtml>

1. The student will be write descriptive paragraphs. (VA SOL 3.9)
2. The student will demonstrate comprehension of information from a variety of print resources. (VA SOL 3.7)
3. The student will edit writing for correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. (VA SOL 3.11)
4. The student will write effective narratives, poems, and explanations. (VA SOL 4.7)

5. The student will edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, spelling, punctuation and sentence structure. (VA SOLs 4.8, 5.9)
6. The student will write for a variety of purposes: to describe, to inform, to entertain and to explain. (VA SOL 5.8)
7. The student will use various art processes and techniques to produce works of art. (SOL 3.2)
8. The student will create a work of art based upon interpretation of sensory experiences. (VA SOL 3.6)
9. The student will synthesize information to produce works of art. (VA SOL 5.1)

Media Components:

Instructional/Video Technology:

- *Club Write Video #106, "Descriptive Writing"*
- VCR
- Overhead projector (optional)
- Computers with internet access

Web Applications:

As a Post Viewing Activity students will create an original drawing of a monster and attempt to communicate that drawing into another child's mind using their art, writing, reading, and technology skills.

Web Sites:

Monster Exchange Sign-up site

<http://www.monsterexchange.org/>

Monster Exchange is designed to encourage the development of reading and writing skills while integrating Internet technology into the classroom curriculum. Classrooms from a variety of schools worldwide are paired together and then the students design an original picture of a monster. The students must then write a description of the monster, which they exchange with the other group of students. The goal is to then draft a monster that resembles the original monster, relying only on the written description.

Monster Exchange

<http://www.siec.k12.in.us/~west/proj/monster/>

This site provides student examples of written descriptions of their monsters and samples of the digitized illustrations to compare.

Build your own Mr. Monster

http://www.monsterexchange.org/kids/kids_javapicture.htm

This site allows students to create their own monsters by dragging and dropping creature parts online.

Materials:

Prep for teachers:

- Preview and cue up *Club Write* video # 106
- Collect posters with pictures of familiar things or create collages with various similar objects such as clowns, babies, birds, dogs, etc. Any pictures that will encourage students to think of descriptive adjectives will do. Post these on the wall around the room spaced apart for small group access.
- Attach large 4 foot sheets of butcher paper underneath each poster (one for each small group)
- Colored broad tip water color markers (a different color for each small group)
- Run off the poetry pattern worksheets (enough for one per student)
- Bookmark web sites listed above

For each student:

- pencils and drawing paper
- crayons, colored pencils, and/or water color markers for small group sharing
- poetry pattern worksheet
- one colored marker for each small group of students

Introductory Activity:

Can you picture this?

1. Ask students to fold a sheet of drawing paper in half (like a hamburger). On one half, ask them to draw a picture of a sandwich without giving any other detailed directions. Give students a moment to do this.
2. Let students share their drawings with each other and the class if they choose to.
3. Next have them close their eyes and lead them through a visualization of making a sandwich by saying the following:

“Imagine you and your friends are getting ready to go on a picnic and you’re in charge of making the sandwiches. You have been waiting a long time for this day and you want your sandwiches to be very special. You have chosen to make sub sandwiches using the large, thick, sesame seed sub rolls. You know, the kind of rolls that have little football shaped seeds on the top. You take the top of the rolls and put them to the side and begin building your sandwiches from the bottom up.

First you spread on the bright yellow mustard or creamy mayonnaise. You lay some dark, green, curly lettuce on top of the bun and let the edges hang out over the side of the sub rolls. Then you pick some thick, red, juicy tomato slices and layer them on top of the lettuce. It takes about three slices for each sandwich since your rolls are so long. Next, you roll up some slices of white turkey breast meat and some deli-style baked ham and carefully place them on top of the tomato slices, one next to the other. Don't forget to put a couple of thick slices of your favorite cheese on top- yellow American cheese or maybe some Swiss cheese, the kind with the holes in it. Top off your sandwich with any of your other favorite items such as onions, pickles, or olives. Now you're ready to put the sesame seed bun on top. You're pleased to see the sandwich is so thick and luscious looking but you're afraid it won't fit into your mouth. Of course you can't wait to give it a try. Yum!

Now, open your eyes and draw a picture of one of the sandwiches you just made for your picnic lunch."

5. Give students time to draw their sandwiches on the other half of their folded paper and color them if time allows. After most students have completed their drawings, have them compare their first drawing to their second drawing.

6. After most students have finished **ask**, "How are your drawings the same? How is the second picture different than the first? What does the second picture have that the first picture is missing?" *Lead students to see that the second picture includes many more details and forms a better picture.*

7. **Say**, "Today we're going to create some more pictures except instead of drawing them, we're going to use words to help form a picture in a person's mind. Good writers are able to use many descriptive words or phrases to help the reader see and feel what the writer is describing."

Hopefully this activity will allow students to see that adding specific details to descriptions helps a person create a more detailed picture in their mind.

Learning Activity:

Vocabulary:

descriptive writing	descriptive phrase
senses	adjectives
sensory words	nouns
brainstorm	descriptive paragraph
details	synonyms

1. Prior to the viewing of the video **say**, "Today we are going to watch a video about some students who are learning how to become better writers. After viewing our

video you should have a better understanding of how to use your senses to add specific details to a descriptive paragraph.” (*Stated objective*)

2. **Say**, “In the first video clip we will be watching some students who are in a writing club. What do you think a writing club might do?” (*Accept all possible suggestions*). “These students are learning how to write descriptions. Does anyone know what a description is?” **Provide a Focus for Media Interaction by saying**, “Listen to the first clip for the definition of a descriptive writing.” **Start Club Write** video # 106, “Descriptive Writing” after the credits. **Pause** at 00:11 after hearing the definition of descriptive writing. To check listening comprehension **ask**, “What is descriptive writing?” (*Writing to describe people, places, or things.*)

3. **Say**, “Descriptive writing can help you in many ways. One way is to write about things you observe. The next video clip will show us how Kyle uses descriptive writing when observing the growth of a plant.” **Refocus students by saying**, “Listen for some things Kyle does when preparing to write a description about plant growth.” **Resume** the tape and **Pause** at 00:31 when you hear, “Quit it.” **Ask**, “What are some things Kyle did to prepare for writing about his plant?” (*Checked it every day, watered it, measured it, drew pictures of it, wrote about how it changed and grew each day*)

4. **Ask**, “Have you ever tried to describe an object to someone who has never seen it before? How might you describe something like ice cream to an alien?” (*Accept all student responses*) **Refocus by saying**, “Let’s listen how one student describes ice cream to an alien. Listen carefully for words or descriptive phrases that are used in his description.” **Resume** the video and **Pause** at 00:57 when the alien says, “Back, stay back.” **Ask**, “What were some words or phrases used to describe ice cream in that clip?” (*frozen milk, cream and sugar, when you put it into your mouth it melts into a sweet, cold creamy treat*) “Could you think of any other descriptive words that could be added to that description?” (*Accept any student descriptions*)

5. **Say**, “When we use descriptive writing it helps us improve our powers of observation. How do people observe things?” (*Accept student responses*). **Provide a Focus for Media Interaction by saying**, “In the next short clip, listen for three different ways we can observe.” **Resume** the tape at 00:57 and **Pause** at 1:19 after you hear “You can also observe by listening.” To check listening comprehension **ask**, “What are three different ways you can observe?” (*1. watch a person, place, or thing; 2. recall from your memories; 3. listen*)

6. **Refocus students by saying**, “Listen carefully to the next clip for something all good writers need to use in order to write good descriptions.” **Resume** tape at 1:17 and **pause** at 1:34 after you hear, “You need details to write good descriptions.” **Ask**, “What is needed to write a good description? (*details*)” **Refocus by saying**, “In the next clip listen carefully for some details that are used to describe a 57 t-bird that belonged to Robin’s grandfather.” **Resume** tape and **stop** at 2:02 when you hear “You can ask him for real.” **Ask**, “What details did you hear used to describe the 57

t-bird?" (*cherry red, chrome is shiny like a mirror, long sharp fins in the back, seats always smell like peppermint*).

7. Provide a Focus for Media Interaction by saying, "In the next video clip the writing club is talking about using your senses to create a picture. Who can name the five senses? How do you think using your senses to describe something helps a reader?" **Refocus by saying,** "Listen carefully for how using your senses helps you describe things more clearly for a reader." **Resume** play at 2:02. and **Pause** at 2:25 when you hear "Using the senses creates word pictures for the reader." To check comprehension **ask,** "How does using details about the senses help a reader?" (It helps create word pictures for the reader).

8. Refocus students by saying, "Listen to the next clip as Brad uses different senses to help him describe something. Pay attention to which of his senses he is using and some of the descriptive words he uses." **Resume** at 2:25 and **pause** at 3:13 when he says "It feels like I'm touching a human brain." **Ask,** "Which of the five senses was Brad using?" (touch) "What are some words he used to describe what he was feeling?" (*Cold, long and wiggly, gooey, lots of curves and bumps*) "What do you think might be in the box?" (*Accept all student predictions*) "What other senses might Brad use to help him figure out what is in the mystery box?" (*smell, taste.*)

7. Refocus by saying, "Let's listen for some more clues." **Resume** tape at 3:20 and **pause** at 3:35 when you hear Brad say, "It tastes like strawberries." **Ask,** "What other senses did Brad use?" (*Smell and taste*). "Which of the senses did Brad not use?" (*sight and hearing*) "What do you think might be in the mystery box now?" (*Allow students to change predictions.*) **Refocus by saying,** "Now listen to see if any of our predictions were correct." Resume tape at 3:35 and **pause** at 3:44 when they show the bowl of spaghetti and jello. **Ask:** "Did anyone make a correct prediction?"

8. Provide a Focus for Media Interaction by saying, "In the next video clip, listen for how descriptive words help readers." **Resume** tape at 3:44. **Stop** at 4:05 when you hear, "They helped us form pictures in our mind about what was in the box." **Ask,** "How do descriptive words help the reader?" (*They help you form pictures in our minds*).

10. Say, "Now we're going to do an activity that will help us develop some descriptive word lists we can use to make our writing more interesting. Does anyone know what we call the kinds of words that tell what kind, how many, or which one?" (*adjectives*) "Yes, these words are called adjectives." Write the word "adjectives" on the board and give some examples of each type. (*what kind, how many, which one*)

Activity Procedures:

1. Assign students to groups of 3-4 students. Have one piece of 4-foot heavy butcher paper posted on the walls or chalkboard for each team. Students will be writing on them so be sure the surface is smooth and that markers don't bleed through the paper. At the top of each piece of butcher paper mount a scenic picture or collage of similar pictures. (*clowns, babies, fish, dogs, etc.*) Label each picture 1-6 or however many small groups there are.
2. Have groups choose a recorder and give him/her a marker. Use a different colored marker for each team. Emphasize the need for all students to contribute, not just the one doing the writing.
3. Assign each group a picture to describe. Students are to make a list of adjectives that describe the pictures. Set a timer for about 2-3 minutes.
4. When the time is up, groups rotate to the next picture and continue adding to the word list on the butcher paper. The only catch is they can't repeat any words that have been listed by another group. Continue to rotate groups until each group has had a chance to describe each picture.
5. When the word lists are complete, the teacher should read through them, asking questions related to specific skills the teacher wants to review. The following are suggestions on what to look for:
 - a. Is the word listed only once?
 - b. Is the word a real word? Would it be found in the dictionary?
 - c. Do you see any words that are synonyms? antonyms? three syllable words? etc.
 - d. Which pictures were the easiest to describe? Why?
 - e. Does this word describe something in the picture?
 - f. Which group do you think made the best and/or most contributions to the word lists? The groups that worked on the pictures first? Last?

Word lists may be kept posted in the room to use for other activities or to provide motivation for other writing activities.
6. In small groups, or individually, have students use the poetry patterns to write a poem using the adjectives generated during the activity. Encourage students to think of adjectives that go together, create a rhythm, or compliment each other in some way. Allow those who would like to share their poems time to do so.

**See attached sheet for poetry pattern at end.*

Culminating Activity

1. **Say**, “Today we’re going to use what we learned yesterday about using details to write a description of our own. *(Review the main points of the previous day’s lesson about how details help form pictures in the reader’s mind.)* Divide students into small groups of 2-3 and instruct the group to create an original drawing of a monster. Have each student draw and add a different detailed body part to the creature. *(Body, head, arms, eyes, tail, etc.)* Try to keep the drawings relatively simple for the sake of the description depending on the grade level.

2. Review the steps of the writing process, *(plan, rough draft, revise, edit, publish)*. On a separate sheet of paper, instruct groups to plan for their writing by listing each body part and brainstorm descriptive details under each category. *(Tail: long, curly, fuzzy, green, etc)*. Emphasize the use of specific adjectives for each body part. *(planning step)*

3. Once lists and drawings have been completed, have the group come up with a name for their monster, a topic sentence and a descriptive paragraph about their creature. Emphasize that other students will be trying to draw their creature by listening to their written descriptions. The more detailed the description, the better the drawing will be. *(rough draft)*

4. Before revising, discuss the generality of the word “big” and elicit more specific synonyms to use. Allow groups to reread their descriptions and use a Thesaurus to generate more specific adjectives. After groups have rewritten and revised their descriptions, have them read them aloud to the class. *(revising)*

5. The class in turn will use listening comprehension to draw what they have pictured in their minds from the description read to them. The final step involves sharing the original picture and comparing it to the pictures drawn by participating classmates. Evaluation will be determined by how closely the pictures resemble each other. A follow-up discussion on what could’ve been done to improve descriptions or what were particularly good descriptive phrases that were used in each of the paragraphs. *This is a good time to allow students to do more revisions if necessary. (revising)*

6. Once revisions have been made, have small groups look for punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, and spelling mistakes. Dictionaries may be used for this part of the writing process. *(editing)*

7. Students are now ready to copy or type their descriptive paragraphs and post them on the web or create a class book with the paragraph on one page and the drawing on the back. This will allow students to try to recreate the drawings without seeing the original. *(publishing)*

Web Application:

This activity may also be used with an interactive web site activity called the Monster Project.

Hints for success with the Monster Project:

- Using markers in softer, brighter colors works well; the monsters show up the clearest when they're drawn with markers.
- Pictures depicting blood, gore, or weapons will not be published.
- Save as gif or jpeg files. It is best to save your pictures at 200 pixels by 200 pixels, which is equivalent to 2.78 inches or 7.06 centimeters. Image editors like Fireworks or Paint Shop Pro allow a user to modify the image size.
- Pictures can also be created in Microsoft Paint or another drawing software application.

<http://www.monsterexchange.org/>
<http://users.techline.com/tmallory/monster/>

Students will draw an original monster and then communicate that drawing into words using the writing process and the writing skills taught by the teacher. The students from a cooperating school receive the description via e-mail and use reading comprehension skills to try to redraw the original monster. The real trick is that the redrawing is done only from the reading of the description. The original and redrawn images are then digitized and published on the World Wide Web in the Mind's Eye Monster Gallery for all to compare.

Assessment:

Any of the post viewing or viewing activities may be used as a form of assessment, or students may be asked to write a descriptive paragraph about a person, place or thing they are familiar with using the writing process to brainstorm, write a rough draft, revise and edit a final version.

Cross-Curricular Extensions:

Art:

- Write descriptive paragraphs about famous paintings of different periods in art history.
- Have students draw or paint pictures based on one descriptive paragraph. Compare pictures for similarities and differences.

Social Studies:

- Find a peer pen pal or e-pal in a foreign country. Write descriptions of yourself, your activities, your customs and the area in which you live.
- Study different regions on earth and write descriptions of these regions (desert, ocean, rain forest, mountains, arctic)
- Write a description of your physical features and compare them to another student.
- Instead of scenic pictures, use period pictures or post certain years at the top of the paper. Have students describe the era using single words.

Math:

- Make a list of adjectives you find on a typical page in a book you are reading or a story you have written. Give each adjective a value according to its vividness. (Very vivid=25c, vivid=15c, average=5c) Count up the value of the adjectives on that page. Write a story and see how valuable you can make it.
- Write story problems which are humorous and detailed. Use story characters from books you are reading, students' names, or create your own characters.
- Use a bar or line graph to show the number of words each group got on each picture in the poetry activity. Use the same colors as the markers for easy comparisons.
- Read a given graph and write descriptively to compare findings and check for accurate comprehension of the graph. (*numbers are adjectives*)
- Count the syllables or number of letters in each adjective and find out what the average number of syllables or letters each word has or which group averaged the highest number.

Science:

- Keep a daily journal of an experiment you are conducting that will take a week or two of observation. Draw pictures and write observations each day. Be sure to use specific adjectives.
- Investigate and research the five senses. Does the sense of sight effect taste? Conduct some taste testing experiments to see if it does. Create other sensory experiments such as sight and hearing or smell.
- Place the words: mammal, reptile, bird, amphibian, arachnid, and fish on the sheets of paper. Have students list characteristics or examples of each—good for a review of the Classification system or as a research project.

Study Skills:

- Look up an adjective in a thesaurus and make a list of synonyms.
- Arrange the words in alphabetical order or divide into syllables.
- Students may make individual word lists. The process may continue by listing action words and adverbs.

Technology:

- Create a creature for Monster Project using application software such as KidPix, Hyperstudio, Microsoft Paint, etc.
- Transfer written story problems, poems, or paragraphs into a Kid Pix or Hyperstudio Program using the text/art tools to create pictures to illustrate the story problem. Use descriptive words and phrases in your story problem.
- Contact a participating e-pal class and write to an e-pal describing yourself, your school, your interests and the area in which you live.
- Create a stack of at least five cards describing something to eat. Use as many senses as you can in the description. The last card gives the answer.

Community Connections:

Invite a local author into the classroom to discuss the use of the senses in writing stories and how it helps readers form pictures in their minds.

Invite a handicapped person who has lost one of their senses to talk to the class about how losing one of your senses heightens their awareness in other areas.

Bring in a human resource that can demonstrate some of the modern technology used to help handicapped people use other senses to function in an everyday world. (Examples such as Braille books, Braille machines, close caption devices, etc.)

Have a scientist or researcher from a local school of higher education address the class on the importance of observation skills in the scientific process.

Student Materials:

See attachment for poetry pattern worksheet

Directions for poetry pattern:

On every double line, students will repeat the noun they have chosen to describe.

For every single line, students will insert an adjective describing that noun.

This pattern works well across the curriculum. (*Books, Books, Books; Animals, Animals, Animals; Explorers, Explorers, Explorers; etc*)

_____, _____, _____, _____

_____, _____, _____, _____

These are just a few.

_____, _____, _____, _____

And don't forget _____

Last of all, best of all,

I love _____
