

# Writing a Description



READING WRITING WORKSHOP  
Theme 1, Grade 5

Copyright © 2007 Sacramento County Office of Education  
Some images used under license from Shutterstock, Inc.

Introduction

# What makes a great description?

A description is a picture in words that helps the reader see, hear, taste, smell, or feel something that the writer has experienced.



## Introduction

# When you write a description...

- start with a high-interest beginning that grabs the reader's attention.
- make crisp and vivid descriptions using sensory language.



## Introduction

# When you write a description...

- provide details in a meaningful order.
- use complete sentences
- conclude the description in a satisfying manner.



## Introduction

# Reading as a Writer

- What scene does this writer paint a description of?
- Which of the five senses does the writer focus most on?
- What are some examples of this sense?



Introduction

# Reading as a Writer

- What is the single most vivid feeling that you get from reading this description?
- How does the writer sum up her description at the end?



Prewriting

# Choosing a Topic

Whom do you see  
as your audience:

- classmates?
- friends?
- people who share your  
enthusiasm for your topic?



Prewriting

# Choosing a Topic

What is your purpose for writing:

- to inform people about an important matter?
- to explain your point of view?
- to entertain?
- to persuade



Prewriting

# Choosing a Topic

How will you publish your description:

- on the Internet?
- in a live reading?
- in a letter that you will send?



## Prewriting

# Ideas for your Description

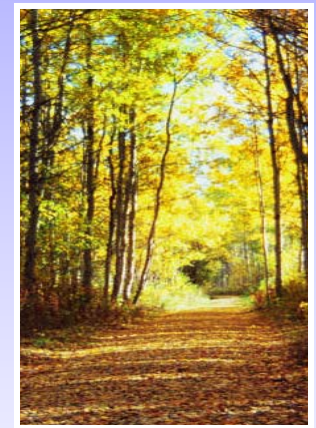
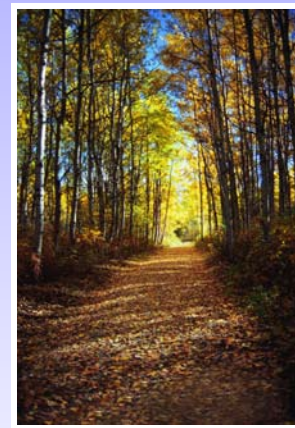
- Where would you take a visitor from another country who wanted to learn what your community was like?
- What person do you admire the most?
- What is the most amazing new thing that you have seen lately?



Prewriting

# Organizing and Planning

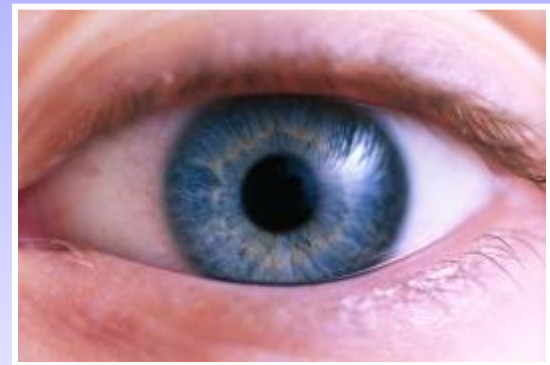
- Focus on the “big picture” first, giving a general impression of your topic.
- Then move on to details that support your impression.
- Delete details that are not directly related.



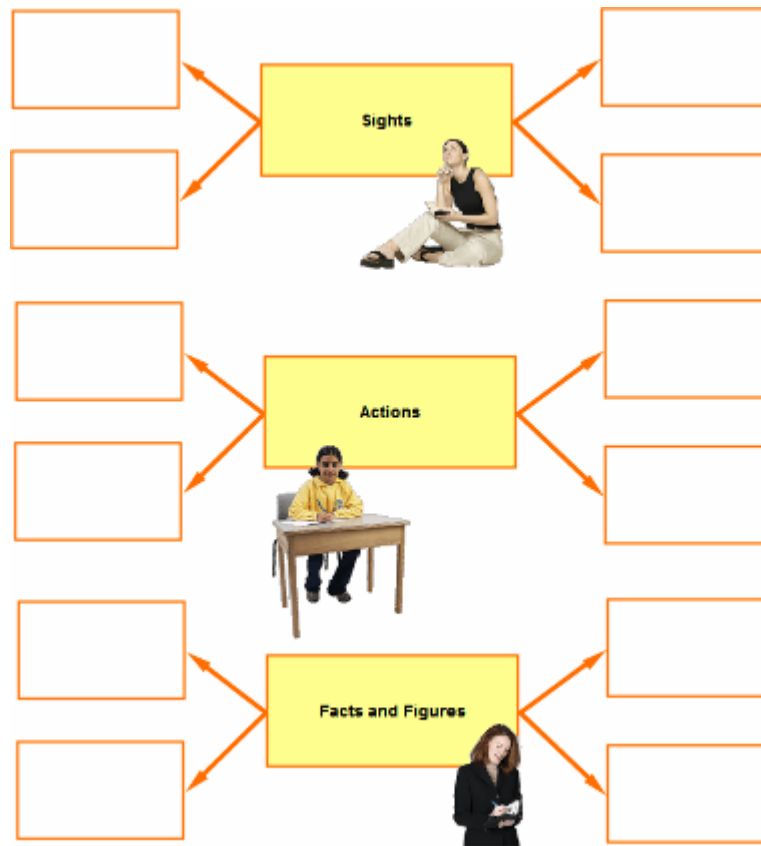
Prewriting

# Organizing and Planning

- Function as your reader's eyes and ears.
- Record sights, sounds, impressions, sensations and other sensory information.
- It will help the reader visualize the scene.



# Prewriting Organizing and Planning



Download this graphic organizer at  
[www.curriculumcompanion.org](http://www.curriculumcompanion.org)

Drafting

# Using Sensory Language

## Sensory Language...

- appeals to the senses.
- helps readers get a first-hand experience of what is being described.
- creates a sharp picture in the reader's mind.
- can be more intense if comparisons are used.



# Revising Organizing Details

- List your details before you order them.
- Include only relevant details.
- If a detail doesn't add to your main point, then leave it out.



# Revising Organizing Details

- Before choosing an organization scheme, take a moment to consider the main point of what you are trying to communicate.
- Schemes can be by order of importance, size, position and so on.



Revising

# Writing Complete Sentences

- A complete sentence has a subject and a predicate.
  - The **subject** is the person, place, or thing that the sentence is about.
  - The **predicate** is a verb or action word.



The girl is smiling.

↑                    ↑  
subject          predicate

Proofreading

# Checking Your Work

## Capitalization

- Is the first word of every sentence capitalized?
- Did you capitalize the proper nouns?

## Punctuation

- Does each sentence end with a punctuation mark?

## Spelling

- Did you double check any words that you were unsure of?

# Publishing and Evaluating Student Self-Assessment

- What do you think was the strongest part of your description?
- What was the weakest part?
- How clear a picture did your description make in your readers' minds?



# Publishing and Evaluating Student Self-Assessment

- How well did you communicate a sense of the subject you were describing?
- What methods of organizing details did you use in your description?
- How would you change this if you were to write it all over again?

