

Descriptive Writing

Purpose:

Learners write a descriptive piece, focusing on how to help their readers to “see” what they are writing about.

Materials:

Descriptive passages of your choosing

Procedures:

1. Select a variety of descriptive passages to read to the learners.
2. Encourage learners to share passages they have been reading that really made them feel like they were *there*. These passages might be describing the setting, an object, or a person. The words used to show action might be particularly descriptive.
3. Have learners try descriptive writing without further instruction. If they are at a loss for where to begin, you might try one of these activities:
Imagine you are asked by a person blind since birth to explain what colors are like. Make a list of colors. Think about what they remind you of. This might give you a handle on how you would describe them to someone who could not see. You can use only those senses that the blind person has – hearing, feeling, tasting, smelling. (*Knots on a Counting Rope* by Bill Martin has a section when Grandfather is trying to explain colors to his blind grandson. This might be read as an introduction or as a follow-up activity.)

Describe your perfect day. Where would you be? What would you do? Who would you share it with?

Source: Barasovska, J. (1998). *I wish I could write: Ideas for inspiring new writers*. Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press.