

## APSU Writing Center

### Descriptive Essay

#### Descriptive Essay

- Aims to vividly describe a person, place, object, event, or experience. It includes poetry, diary entries, and nature writing. It appeals to the reader's five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch.

#### How to write a descriptive essay:

##### Choose a Topic

- For a descriptive essay, your instructor might give you a prompt that you need to describe using your own experience, emotions, or imagination.
  - **Example:** Describe a place where you love spending your time.
  - **Example:** Describe what it might be like to live on another planet.
  - **Example:** Describe the feeling of envy.

##### Create an Outline

- Provide background information and introduce the main idea or thesis statement. Divide each body paragraph into one specific aspect or detail of the subject. The conclusion should summarize the main points.

##### Brainstorm Descriptive Details

- Use concrete details and images to support your overall topic. Incorporate what you are describing. What does it smell, look, feel, sound, or taste like?
  - **Example:** Jack sat under a bare, brittle tree whose bark was rotting off.
  - **Example:** I feel the bonfire's heat on my face, and smell the rich smoke filling the air.

##### Describe Emotions

- Describe in detail how you feel about the topic. Did you experience happiness, joy, grief, sadness, anxiety, anger, love, or frustration?
  - **Example:** Tears welled up in her eyes, threatening to spill over like raindrops on a stormy night.
  - **Example:** His hands trembled uncontrollably, as if possessed by some unseen force, his mind racing with irrational thoughts and worst-case scenarios.

##### Use Figurative Language

- Include figurative languages such as similes, metaphors, personification, hyperboles, alliteration, and more to add depth and create imagery.
  - Examples:
  - **Simile:** The stars twinkled like diamonds in the night sky.
  - **Metaphor:** Her smile was a ray of sunshine on a cloudy day.
  - **Personification:** The river danced over the rocks on its journey to the sea.
  - **Hyperbole:** He's as tall as a skyscraper!
  - **Onomatopoeia:** The bees buzzed around the flowers in the garden.
  - **Alliteration:** The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain.
  - **Imagery:** The scent of fresh-baked bread wafted through the air.

##### Use a Thesaurus

- A thesaurus provides a variety of vocabulary words that can help when writing a descriptive essay.

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#### References

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