

Descriptive Writing Structure

Adjectives, metaphors, similes, personification, show don't tell, five senses

<p>Opening - Long shot</p> 	<p>Start by describing the whole scene in detail – choose words carefully to establish tone and mood. Mention something that you will return to in your last paragraph to frame your writing.</p> <p><i>When we children came home from school, we were left to our own devices. Against the stark backdrop of rusty brick and faded adverts, whole worlds unfolded...</i></p> <p><i>The boys look up to the sky, as if awaiting angels or benediction...</i></p>
<p>Zoom</p> 	<p>Next, focus on one detail in the scene and describe it in detail; suggest its importance to the scene. Use figurative language to add sophistication.</p> <p><i>Bargains are stuck by a fragrant pile of ripe mangoes as mother gathers ingredients for a family supper, the baby squawking contentedly in the crook of her arm.</i></p>
<p>Change perspective</p> 	<p>Imagine the scene through the eyes of someone who is there – what are they thinking and feeling? Remember to show rather than tell. For example, how does she feel about the situation she is in? About the scene in front of her?</p> <p><i>Sometimes I stood in a window, gazing absently at the games below. It seemed as if nothing would ever disturb the peace of those times...</i></p>
<p>Zoom</p> 	<p>Pick on another detail to describe but try to find something that contrasts with what has gone before, like the shuttered windows. Why might this be important? Well chosen adjectives, verbs and figurative language can add layers to your writing.</p> <p><i>My brother always triumphed at badminton: the smart swish of the racquet followed by the whistle of a cleanly whipped shuttlecock...</i></p>
<p>Ending - emotion</p> 	<p>Finally, focus on one more detail that ties in with your first paragraph – this is a moment to introduce an alternative mood or feeling; perhaps highlight the different human emotions. Finish by creating an emotional atmosphere</p> <p><i>For a moment all stops. Every eye is fixed on the sky as we wait for the shuttlecock to descend. I hold that moment in my mind now, like a talisman against the storm that followed. No one plays in these streets now.</i></p>