

# Revision Practice:

## Sample Descriptive Paragraph



# Remember:

- A descriptive paragraph only describes; it DOES NOT tell a story
- Avoid the use of first person pronouns:  
I, me, my
- Avoid the use of second person pronouns:  
you
- Avoid listing and repeating the same sentence beginning.
- Make the reader feel as if he/she was there at that moment.

Avoid the use of first person pronouns:

**I, me, my, mine, we, us, etc.**

- There paragraph is not about you! Take first person pronouns out!
- Example: **I** think Belle is the most beautiful princess ever. She is my favorite. ← (Not about you! Take this out!)
- Rewrite: Belle, **the most beautiful princess ever**, is charming, sweet, and kind. (Did you notice the appositive !?!?)

# Avoid the use of second person pronouns: you, your

- Again, not about you. Focus on the subject of the paragraph.
- Example: The dragon is big. **You** would see its scaly skin. **You** would smell its foul breath. **You** would hear the hiss of the dragon's breath.
- Rewrite: The dragon is big with rough, dry, scaly skin. The stench of the dragon's foul breath fills the air. The sound of the dragon's hissing echoes in the cave. (Ok, I got rid of the "you" but look at how all my sentences begin. I am really just listing! That is not good descriptive writing!)

# Your turn...

- Remove any first or second person pronouns from your paragraph!
- This means no **I or you**
- Do not replace "you" with "everyone" or "people"!!!

# Avoid listing and repeating the same sentence beginning.

- Don't just list the description of your subject. Also, use different sentence beginnings.
- Example: **The dragon** is big with rough, dry, scaly skin. **The stench** of the dragon's foul breath fills the air. **The sound** of the dragon's hissing echoes in the cave. (Notice how all the sentences begin with "The \_\_\_\_\_". This is more of a list than a paragraph. Very boring!!!)
- Rewrite: Rough, dry, scaly skin covers the huge dragon's body. Hissing noises echo off the cave walls and the foul stench of the dragon's breath fills the air.

# Revise your paragraph

- Does your paragraph have any of these problems???
  - Look for
    1. 1<sup>st</sup> person pronouns and revise
    2. 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronouns and revise
    3. repeated sentence beginnings and listing. Revise!!!
- Does your paragraph look better?!?!?

Lets picture the scene, character,  
object... a snowy evening



# Descriptive Paragraph Rough Draft

- Snowy evenings in the enchanted forest are beautiful. The woods were dark. The air was cold. The ground was brown, and the smell of snow was in the air. It was bitterly cold. The wind could be heard through the trees. The sky was filled with stars. There was a cottage was in the distance. Suddenly, the clouds above opened and snow began to fall.

(This is ok...but I think I can add more sensory imagery...)



# Sensory Imagery

Let's add more!!!!



Sight	Pitch black night; glowing cottage; twinkling stars
Sound	Quiet, silence; wind blowing, occasional branches rustling
Touch	Hard, frozen ground; crisp, cold air; warm cottage
Smell	Snow in the air
Taste	

# Sensory imagery

Think of your subject and fill in this chart.

Sight	
Sound	
Touch	
Smell	
Taste	

# Let's add sensory imagery

(see orange changes)

Snowy evenings in the enchanted forest are beautiful. The woods were still and black. The ground was hard and brown, and the crisp smell of fresh snow was in the air. The blowing of the wind and the occasional rustling of leaves were the only sounds on this quiet night. The ink-black sky was filled with bright, twinkling stars. In the distance, a small cottage glowed warmly. Suddenly, the clouds above opened and snow began to fall.

9/30/13

- Now, let's have some fun and add figurative language!!!

# Examples of Figurative Language

\***Similes**: a comparison using like or as

Example: *The cat was like the night, dark and quiet*

\***Metaphor**: comparison NOT using like or as

Example: *The cat was night creeping up the stairs.*

\***Personification**: giving something non-human, human characteristics

Example: *Night silently crept under the door, whispering to me to go to sleep.*



# Similes

1. The clouds were white.

The clouds were as white as new-fallen snow.

2. The monster was tall.

The monster was as tall as a skyscraper.

3. His eyes were red.

His eyes were red like the heart of a blazing, hot furnace.

# Metaphor

1. The princess was pretty.

The princess was a beautiful rose in full bloom.

2. The door was very strong.

The door was a wall of solid rock.

3. The dungeon was dark and quiet.

The dungeon was a tomb of silence.

# Personification

1. The cottage was cheerful.  
The cottage **smiled happily** at all visitors.
2. The night was very cold.  
The night wrapped its **icy, cold fingers** around the forest.
3. The leaves floated from the trees.  
The leaves **danced gracefully** through the air to the ground below.

# Onomatopoeia

- How about some sound words?
- Onomatopoeia lets the reader hear the sound because the word makes the noise!
- Words like: **buzz, crash, bang, zoom**  
**growl, moan, crash, boom**

# Let's Add Figurative Language (see green changes)

Snowy evenings in the enchanted forest are beautiful. The woods were still and black. The ground was hard brown slate, and the crisp smell of fresh snow was in the air. The night put its icy, cold fingers around the forest. The whispering of the wind and the occasional rustling of leaves were the only sounds on this quiet night. The ink-black sky was filled with a million stars, bright and twinkling like diamonds. In the distance a small cottage glowed warmly, a beacon of welcome on this cold night. Suddenly, the clouds above opened and an army of dainty snowflakes began to fall.

# 10/1/13

- Almost done!!!
- Now let's look carefully at word choice.

# Word choice: Vivid Verbs

## Plain Verb

## Vivid Verb

said

questioned, yelled, stammered

walked

scampered, trotted, sauntered

looked

glanced, stared, gazed, scanned

thought

pondered, reminisced, debated

wrote

scribed, scribbled, penned

ate

devoured, nibbled, consumed

# Word Choice: Adding Adjectives

## ■ Adjectives tell ...

which one

those trees

this dress

these dogs

Rocky

Mountains

what kind

those cedar trees

this pink, tulle dress with ruffles and lace

these fierce, angry,  
black and tan pit bulls

tall, beautiful, majestic mountain peak  
cloud-covered, stark, dark range of mountains

how many

those two cedar trees

several fierce, angry  
black and tan bit bulls

## Specific word choice (changes in yellow)

Cold, snowy evenings in the enchanted forest are beautiful and special. The woods were silent and pitch black. The frozen ground was hard brown slate, yet the crisp smell of fresh snow was in the air. The night wrapped its icy, cold fingers around the forest. The whispering of the wind and the occasional rustling of leaves were the only sounds on this quiet night. The ink-black sky was filled with a million stars, bright and twinkling like diamonds. In the distance a cozy, small cottage glowed warmly, a beacon of welcome on this cold night. Suddenly, the clouds above opened and an army of dainty snowflakes on gossamer wings began to fall. The white snow covered the ground, making the forest seem new and fresh. (new ending sentence)

# Did you notice...

- Every paragraph needs an introduction sentence and closing sentence.
- Begin your paragraph with a sentence that introduces the reader to the subject of the paragraph: **Cold, snowy evenings in the enchanted forest are beautiful and special.**
- Conclude your paragraph with a sentence that gives your paragraph an ending: **The white snow covered the ground, making the forest seem new and fresh.**

# Intro and closing sentences

- The dragon was exquisite and beautiful. (now describe it!!!)
- An ordinary door lead to an extraordinary room. (now describe it!)
- In a valley hidden from human eyes was a magical place. (now describe it!)
- This amazing dragon would never be forgotten.
- Never ordinary, the beautiful room is a truly special place.
- This magical valley remains flawless in its beauty and perfection.

I still see several of the same sentence beginnings...

Cold, frosty, snowy evenings in the enchanted forest are beautiful and special. The woods were silent and pitch black. The frozen ground was hard brown slate, and the crisp smell of fresh snow was in the air. The night wrapped its icy, cold fingers around the forest. The whispering of the wind and the rustling leaves were the only sounds on this quiet night. The ink-black sky was filled with a million stars, bright and twinkling like diamonds. In the distance a cozy, small cottage glowed warmly, a beacon of welcome on this cold night. Suddenly, the clouds above opened and an army of dainty snowflakes on gossamer wings began to fall. The white snow covered the ground, making the forest seem new and fresh. (new ending sentence)

## Final paragraph...

Cold, frosty, snowy evenings in the enchanted forest are beautiful and special. The woods were silent and pitch black. Frozen solid, the ground was hard brown slate, and the crisp smell of fresh snow was in the air. Softly and gently, the night wrapped its icy, cold fingers around the forest. The whispering of the wind and the occasional rustling of leaves were the only sounds on this quiet night. Above the forest, a million stars, bright and twinkling like diamonds filled the ink-black sky. In the distance the cozy, warm cottage glowed warmly, a beacon of welcome on this cold night. Suddenly, the clouds above opened and an army of dainty snowflakes on gossamer wings began to fall. The white snow covered the ground, making the forest seem new and fresh. (new ending)