

Third Grade Writing Lesson #1/ Descriptive Prompt

Summary

To write a descriptive piece that paints a picture in the reader's mind.

Main Core Tie

English Language Arts Grade 3

[Writing Standard 3 a.](#)

Additional Core Ties

English Language Arts Grade 3

[Writing Standard 5](#)

Time Frame

4 class periods of 30 minutes each

Materials

Teacher Materials:

Selected books:

- *All the Places to Love*
 , Patricia McLachlan
 - *Grandfather's Journey*
 , Allen Say
 - *Miss Rumphius*
 , Barbara Cooney
 - *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*
 , Dr. Seuss
 - *A Quiet Place*
 , Douglas Wood
 - *The Sea Chest*
 , Toni Buzzeo
- Any book with a vivid setting

Student Materials:

Writing paper
Pencil

Instructional Procedures

1. Pre-write

(plan). Read aloud one or more books about favorite places.

Give students one minute to make a list of as many of their favorite places as they can.

Let the class share their lists. Students may make any additions to their own lists.

Ask students to choose one place about which to write.

Using a graphic organizer, have students write words that describe their favorite place.

6. Write

(compose). From their graphic organizers, have students compose a draft describing their favorite place.

7. Revise

(improve). Give time for students to meet in groups to read and discuss improvements to their papers. Following group conferences, give students time to improve their drafts by adding, deleting, or reordering ideas based on feedback.

8. Edit

(proofread). Help students check their own papers and make corrections for spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization. Have students make a final copy.

9. Publish

(share). Choose a format for students to share their papers with others.

Writing Prompt:

Everyone has favorite places where they feel happy. Choose one favorite place and describe what that place is like, using as many senses as you can. Use rich, descriptive words so your reader can imagine being in your special place.

EXAMPLE #1

[My Fun Time at the Beach](#) (pdf)

IDEAS AND CONTENT: [4]

The writer writes from knowledge and experience, and the piece is focused on the topic.

However, it does not keep the reader anticipating.

ORGANIZATION: [4]

The pacing moves along and is controlled by word choice. The organization flows smoothly.

VOICE: [4]

The writing is honest and very personal, and the writer is committed to the topic.

WORD CHOICE: [5]

The writer uses specific nouns and modifiers appropriately. The writer uses natural and effective phrasing.

SENTENCE FLUENCY: [4]

The cadence of language is not as smooth as it should be, but the writer uses a variety of ways to construct sentence beginnings.

CONVENTIONS: [4]

The writer attempts to manipulate conventions for a stylistic effect, but spelling and end punctuation are generally correct.

EXAMPLE #2

[My First Fishing Trip](#) (pdf)

IDEAS AND CONTENT: [5]

The topic is appropriately narrow and manageable, and the writer gives relevant, quality details.

ORGANIZATION: [5]

The organization flows smoothly, the pacing is well controlled, and the title captures the central theme of the piece.

VOICE: [5]

The writer's voice is honest, personal, and engaging. The writer reveals something about himself.

WORD CHOICE: [4]

The writer attempts to use colorful language, but it is occasionally contrived. The writer uses a variety of verbs.

SENTENCE FLUENCY: [4]

Sentences vary in length and are usually well constructed. Several sentences begin the same way: "I saw," "I hopped," "Then..." One sentence is awkward: "...because my dad wouldn't...."

CONVENTIONS: [3]

Most words are capitalized correctly and ending punctuation is usually correct. Moderate editing is needed to polish the piece.

EXAMPLE #3

[The Place I Love](#) (pdf)

IDEAS AND CONTENT: [3]

The writer generally stays on the topic. The ideas are reasonably clear.

ORGANIZATION: [3]

The pacing is fairly well controlled, and the paper has an identifiable introduction and conclusion.

VOICE: [3]

The writing is sincere. The piece is pleasant and personable, but not compelling.

WORD CHOICE: [3]

The writer makes attempts at vivid language. (Example: "...grandfather clock ticking gently away").

SENTENCE FLUENCY: [3]

Sentence fluency is more mechanical than fluid. Sentence construction is simple but correct. A variety of sentence beginnings are evident.

CONVENTIONS: [3]

End punctuation is usually correct and most words are spelled correctly. The writer needs to pay more attention to the differences between their and there.

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