

Example of a Description of Action

Have you ever witnessed a scene of such peace and tranquility that its beauty overwhelmed you? Such was the scene of two beautiful deer grazing in the still pasture as twilight approached. Blues, purples, pinks, yellows, and oranges streaked the sky like a magnificent painting. Every few seconds, one of the deer's tails twitched as it lifted its head to look around carefully before returning to its dinner. Dark shadows lengthened as the evening crept closer and closer. The forest that surrounded the pasture seemed to beckon to the deer, urging them to seek refuge from any lurking dangers.

Suddenly from out of the forest, a large fox raced toward the deer. As soon as they sensed movement, the deer took off in opposite directions, at first erratic and confused, then purposeful and focused as they ran as fast as a speeding locomotive attempting to evade their predator. The fox paused. Then, instinctively, it raced after the slower deer, deep into the pine forest. Then, all was quiet again in the pasture. Quiet. Dark. Somehow less peaceful.



The sky quickly became a murky grayish pink. The sky painting appeared as if a bucket of water had spilled across the canvas, washing away the vibrant colors. Two bunnies darted playfully and fireflies flickered repeatedly in the dusk. Within minutes the atmosphere of peace had returned, the skirmish toward death forgotten.



Stylistic elements included:

Vivid verbs: grazing, approached, streaked, twitched, lifted, lengthened, crept, beckon, seek, raced, evade, paused, ensued, created, entered, followed, darted, flickered, returned.

Alliteration: tails twitched; fireflies flickered

Assonance: The forest that surrounded the pasture seemed to beckon to the deer, urging them to seek refuge from any lurking dangers.

Simile: The sky painting disappeared as if a bucket of water had spilled across the canvas, washing the vibrant colors away.

Personification: . . .the evening crept closer; The forest . . . seemed to beckon to the deer, urging them to seek refuge from any lurking dangers.

Descriptive Writing Rubric

Directions: Use the following rubric to evaluate descriptive writing

I. Elements of Descriptive Writing

1. The topic is focused. (2)
2. The lead is engaging and “grabs” the reader. (4)
3. Supporting details are sufficient. (4)
4. Conclusion is powerful. (4)
5. An awareness of audience is evident. (2)
6. Transitions link ideas. (3)
7. Sentence structure is varied. (3)
8. Sentence length is varied. (3)

Total points out of 25

Self	Peer	Teacher

II. Writer’s Evaluation

My strengths in my writing are _____

My work habits throughout the writing process were _____

My goals for improvement include _____

Kinds of Leads for Descriptive Writing

Strong leads engage the reader. Read the examples below to learn how to get the reader's attention.

Lead #1: Use strong visual imagery

Red, orange, gold, and yellow—such are the colors of a glorious autumn day.

Lead #2: Use dialogue

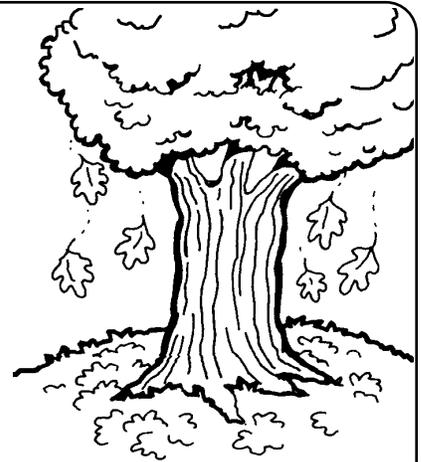
“Christina, it might be wise to wear a light sweater today.” As mom and daughter prepared to go outside, they discussed their plans for the day. As they stepped foot outside, they felt the chill in the air as the red, gold, and orange leaves drifted to the ground. A squirrel played behind the magnolia tree as Christina and her mother climbed into their dark blue sedan.

Lead #3: Use repetition of verbs

Imagine a gorgeous autumn day where the trees are turning yellow, orange, and red. Imagine the squirrels gathering nuts and acorns preparing for winter. Imagine the slight chill in the air as the days get longer and longer. Imagine the sound of the crunching leaves as you walk along the blanket of dead leaves covering the yards and sidewalks.

Lead #4: Use a personal story

I remember the time that I traveled to my grandmother's house for her autumn birthday. My mom, dad, sister, and I made the six-hour journey in our minivan reading stories and singing songs along the way. As we traveled up the East Coast, we went through Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. As we approached each state, I made a prediction about the status of the trees. The further north we went, the more vibrant colors we encountered. Reds, oranges, golds, and yellows filled the landscaping, reminding us of the glorious celebration of the seasons.



Lead #5: Use a rhetorical question

Have you ever gone outside on an autumn day and been overwhelmed by the explosion of orange, red, gold, and yellow in front of you?

Lead #6: Use a simile or metaphor

The red, orange, gold, and yellow leaves filled the horizon with brilliant color. As we traveled along the road, the vibrant trees looked like huge bouquets gathered for a special occasion.