**Descriptive Paragraph**

*"When we can feel the breeze that sweeps through the valley—that's the kind of descriptive writing that comes alive." —*Rita Dove, American poet

Descriptive writing appeals to one or more of your five senses—sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. It can make you see the lights of traffic on a bridge at night, smell the smoke of a dying campfire, or hear crickets sing. Description is writing that uses vivid details to capture a scene, a setting, a person, or a moment and share it with others.

Most descriptive writing contains

* Sensory language that helps readers to share experiences with the writer
* Vivid verbs, precise nouns, and descriptive modifiers
* Figurative language or comparisons—such as personification, exaggeration, similes, and metaphors—to inspire readers' imagination
* Logical organization, such as chronological or spatial order

**Descriptive Paragraph Rubric**

Content

\_\_\_\_ / 5 Topic sentence and clincher ending

\_\_\_\_ / 5 Sensory and vivid details

\_\_\_\_ / 5 Logical organization

**\_\_\_\_/ 15 Total Content**

Mechanics

\_\_\_\_ /5 Typed/proper MLA format with heading, 1” margins/Length (7 sentences)

\_\_\_\_ /5 Spelling/Punctuation/Grammar

**\_\_\_\_ /10 Total Mechanics**

**\_\_\_\_ /25 points total**

**Possible ideas:**

* your favorite food
* the scene at a concert or athletic event
* your neighborhood
* a pizza
* a pet
* a particular friend or family member
* an inspiring view
* a character from a book, movie, or television program
* a Halloween costume
* your Grandma’s kitchen
* your bedroom
* a basketball, baseball glove, or tennis racket
* a treasured belonging
* a favorite restaurant
* a closet
* your memory of a place that you visited as a child
* a locker

**Descriptive Paragraph Example 1:** Gregory is my beautiful gray Persian cat. He walks with pride and grace, performing a dance of disdain as he slowly lifts and lowers each paw with the delicacy of a ballet dancer. His pride, however, does not extend to his appearance, for he spends most of his time indoors watching television and growing fat. He enjoys TV commercials, especially those for Meow Mix and 9 Lives. His familiarity with cat food commercials has led him to reject generic brands of cat food in favor of only the most expensive brands. Gregory may snuggle up against your ankle, begging to be petted, or he may imitate a skunk and stain your favorite trousers. No matter what others say, I look at this old fleabag snoozing and smiling to himself in front of the television set, and I have to forgive him for his obnoxious, but endearing, habits.

**Descriptive Paragraph Example 2:** My most valuable possession is an old, slightly warped blond guitar-- the first instrument I taught myself how to play. It's nothing fancy, just a Madeira folk guitar, all scuffed and scratched and full of finger prints. At the top is a bramble of copper-wound strings, each one hooked through the eye of a silver tuning key. The strings are stretched down a long, slim neck, its frets tarnished, the wood worn by years of fingers pressing chords and picking notes. The body of the Madeira is shaped like an enormous yellow pear, one that was slightly damaged in shipping. The blond wood has been chipped and gouged to gray, particularly where the pick guard fell off years ago. No, it's not a beautiful instrument, but it still lets me make music, and for that I will always treasure it.