

Writing to Describe

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Title: Descriptive Paragraphs

Subject: Language Arts (with choices of integration)

Grades: Designed for 3rd

Description: This unit is designed to teach the students the skills necessary to write a descriptive paragraph.

Modeling helps a writing program be more successful, especially at first. It is important that students see and understand the evaluation and decision-making processes that are in good writing by using and polishing good ideas, discarding ideas that don't work, identifying and correcting errors, and making changes after the drafting stage.

Faith Integration: Our Bibles will be used to help the students see some wonderful illustrations of words through descriptions. We will see the use of words to paint pictures and how it the words can use all of the senses.

Nature is God's second book, so we will be using this particular assignment for integration of science and math with language arts by taking a walk outdoors to look for patterns in things like leaves, butterflies, pine cones, or spider webs.

Curriculum Benchmarks:

I. Language Arts:

- ✍ use descriptive words
- ✍ choose a topic
- ✍ observe details
- ✍ use your senses to describe
- ✍ write good topic sentences and paragraphs
- ✍ draft (or write) your paragraph

- ✍ revise your paragraph
- ✍ proofread and edit your paragraph
- ✍ publish your paragraph
- ✍ illustrate your paragraph

II. Technology :

Students will be able to:

- ✍ use a digital camera in order to take a picture for their paragraphs.
- ✍ download and transfer the digital camera pictures that they took during the walk.
- ✍ use a variety of skills in typing their paragraphs to present to the class and for displaying such as: setting margins, spell check, copy and paste, moving or deleting sentences, use of different fonts and size of fonts, etc.

Materials/Hardware/Software

- ✍ Computers/printers/paper
- ✍ Internet access
- ✍ paper/pencils
- ✍ State standards (Tenn. - Language Arts) (3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5)
- ✍ Writing Fabulous Sentences & Paragraphs by Evan Moor (EMC 575)
- ✍ Portfolios Helps - Describing-Strategies for Writers by Zaner Bloser
- ✍ Digital camera /program to manipulate pictures /paper/film
- ✍ Overhead projector/overheads
- ✍ Rubrics for proofreading / Assessment (peer and teacher)
- ✍ Graphic organizer (www.bjbarton.com/graphic_organizers.html)
then hit multi-purpose, last it is web #2

Teacher Preparation

The teacher will need

- ✍ to have the students either bring digital cameras or supply one for use.
- ✍ to make overheads of examples that are used in modeling, and of the rubrics for instruction on how to use properly.
- ✍ to have a list of students that can work together in pairs and or groups.
- ✍ need to have handouts copied and sorted according to use.
- ✍ to put aside time for conferencing with each child when they begin writing the drafts of their paragraphs. This does not have to be every day for each child.
- ✍ to create/find a story web organizer to use.(see web site given)

After the initial walk that the children take in order to gather their topic, the teacher needs to have the children make a copy of their pictures.

Computers and printers need to be available or coordinate with the computer teacher on what the teacher would like the students to accomplish during computer time.

Student Preparation

Students will need to know...

- how to write and recognize complete sentences.
- how to log on to the internet and follow directions.
- how to save pictures into a given computer file.
- how to take pictures.
- how to recognize topic sentences.
- how to log in and use the program of Kids pix (4)
- how to recognize nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

Activities / Procedures

(Partners will be needed throughout most of the work)

- I. Prewriting** - We will 'warm up' to describing things by playing a game. Each student is to describe a person, place, or thing without using its name to their partner. They are to begin the description with 'I am' or 'I have'Example: if you are describing your reading book you should start with something like, 'I am made of paper...'.
II. Using Descriptive Words: Practice by using nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs. Use Sheet #1 on an overhead for examples for this practi

III. 'Topic Walk'

Our class will go on a walk to take pictures of things around us in nature that we may be interested in describing. They will also have their notebooks and write down what they take pictures of. From the pictures, we will discuss with our partners (pair share/cooperative learning) such questions as:

1. Which of these 'topic' pictures would be easiest to describe?
2. Who is going to read the description? (audience)
3. Which topic would the readers enjoy the most?
4. Is any of the topics too broad?
5. Which of the topics would be most fun to write about?

Afterwards, they will write down the topic of that they have chosen.

IV. Creating details

The teacher will hand out a graphic organizer (story web) and have them get out their copy of the picture that is their topic. The teacher will model how to use the organizer on the overhead and do it with them using a subject/topic of their choice. (Use the graphic organizer site listed under materials for your organizer.)

Using the picture (put in middle) or write the name of your topic in middle of the story organizer. Brainstorm phrases or words that would describe the chosen topic.

V. Using Senses to Describe

Using an overhead of the sheet #2, the teacher needs to demonstrate how to use word pictures that help the reader feel, smell, taste, hear, or see the topic. She may use Random Call (Cooperative learning) to have children share their ideas. You may look at p. 14 of the Descriptive writing portfolio Helps by Zaner Bloser for an example. Explain to the student that they may not use all of the details in the paragraph, but they will use many of them. (sheet #2 on next page) After the demonstration, they will do the sheet using their own topic.

VI. Organizing our Ideas

Explain to the students the three parts of a descriptive paragraph. (The topic sentence, the details (description), and the closing or conclusion) Have the teacher model with a descriptive organizer taken from Writing Fabulous Sentences and Paragraphs by Evan -Moor, page 72.

This may be modeled more than once. Use other pages from the book for this. (The teacher may also use sheet #3 for this if needed.)

After the modeling, the students will work on their own to do their own organizer. Use sheet #3 for this.

If needed, review topic sentences and conclusions.

VII. Writing your Rough Draft

Teacher needs to review paragraphs with the children before they begin their drafts. This will be the first version of their paragraph. Before writing, have partners discuss:

1. Who is going to read the essay?
2. Do I have colorful words to help the reader in reading the description?

Have the teacher model how to put together the paragraph, taking it from the organizer. The student then writes their first draft using every other line so that the corrections may be written in the lines between. Emphasize to not worry about mistakes on **this** draft.

VIII. Making Revisions

Discuss the three main components of revising: **ADD**- important information you may have left out. **DELETE** - information you don't need. and **MOVE** - information that is in the wrong place. In going over this, you will save time later when the writing is more than one paragraph.

IX. Editing and Proofreading

The teacher needs to go over the rubrics (located after sheet # 3) for partners to use. Demonstration may be necessary.

Have each person have their partners proofread their paragraphs using the rubrics to help with editing.

X. Illustrating and Publishing Your Work

When the student has gone through the process of proofreading, conferencing, and rewriting their work until it is mistake free, then it is ready for publishing.

The student is to use a word processing program (Microsoft word) to type out their work for the sharing and displaying of work. (One more proofread by teacher may be necessary after typing.)

The student may then use the picture on the computer to manipulate and put it on their work for illustration.

.....SHARE THEN DISPLAY WORK!!!

Assessment/Evaluation

- ✍ Participation in class
- ✍ Participation in partner activities
- ✍ Demonstration of understanding on sheets given.
- ✍ Rubric (Created by 3rd grade teachers of A.W. Spalding)

Follow-up Activities

> Using the skill taught the student will write several more descriptive paragraphs.

>Using the skill taught in this unit, the student will then learn how to write a descriptive essay with several paragraphs.

NOTE:

*The web site listed with the graphic organizer is great for many different kinds of organizers.

*Another good book to use for examples is : Paragraph Writing (Evan - Moor) EMC 246

Descriptive Words...Let's Practice!!

Name _____

	<u>Nouns</u>	<u>More Descriptive Noun</u>	<u>Adjective and Noun</u>
1.	<u>dog</u>	<u>sheepdog</u>	<u>shaggy sheepdog</u>
2.	<u>bird</u>	_____	_____
3.	<u>ball</u>	_____	_____
4.	<u>house</u>	_____	_____

	<u>Adjective and Noun</u>	<u>Action Verb</u>	<u>Adverb</u>
1.	<u>shaggy sheepdog</u>	<u>jumped</u>	<u>excitedly</u>
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____



(LA - descriptive paragraphs - sheet #2)

Using My Senses to Describe

My topic is _____

I can see:

I can feel:

I can smell:

I can taste:

I can hear:

Descriptive Paragraph Organizer

Name _____

(Topic) _____

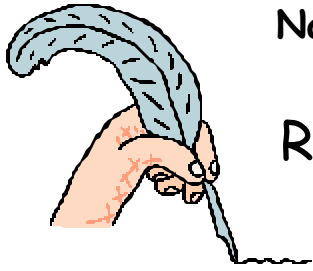
Topic Sentence:

Detail sentence:

Detail sentence:

Detail sentence:

Closing Sentence:



Name: _____ Date _____

Rubric for Writing Descriptive* Paragraphs

Third Grade Writing

*A **descriptive paragraph** describes a person, place, or thing. A good descriptive paragraph uses words that help readers see, hear, smell, feel and taste the subject.

Self and Peer Checklist

(✓ - means they did correctly)

(✗ - means they need help)

Sentence Skills	Self	Peer
Name and date are written on the paper.		
The sentences begin with a capital letter .		
The sentences make sense .		
The sentences end with correct punctuation .		
All writing stays within the margins .		
Words are spelled correctly .		

Handwriting Skills	Self	Peer
All letters are the correct size and form.		
Words are written on the lines.		
Proper spacing between words, sentences, and paragraphs		
Writing is neat and clean.		

Paragraph Skills	Self	Peer
The title is capitalized and punctuated correctly.		
The first sentence is indented .		
The paragraph has an interesting topic sentence that tells the main idea.		
Every sentence tells about the topic or main idea.		
The writing is easy to follow .		
The writer uses as many of the five senses as he can to tell about the topic. (How it looks, sounds, smells, feels, or tastes.)		
The writer uses exact adjectives throughout the paragraph.		
The last sentence gives closure to what you are describing		

Draft # _____

Teacher Checklist

Name of Student _____ Date _____

1-Not evident

2-Developing

3-Proficient

Sentence Skills	1	2	3
Name and date are written on the paper.			
The sentences begin with a capital letter .			
The sentences make sense .			
The sentences end with correct punctuation .			
All writing stays within the margins .			
Words are spelled correctly .			

Handwriting Skills	1	2	3
All letters are the correct size and form.			
Words are written on the lines.			
Proper spacing between words, sentences, and paragraphs.			
Writing is neat and clean.			

Paragraph Skills	1	2	3
The title is capitalized and punctuated correctly.			
The first sentence is indented .			
The paragraph has an interesting topic sentence that tells the main idea.			
Every sentence tells about the topic or main idea.			
The writing is easy to follow .			
The writer uses as many of the five senses as he can to tell about the topic. (How it looks, sounds, smells, feels, or tastes.)			
The writer uses exact adjectives throughout the paragraph.			
The best detail is written last.			

1-Not evident: skill is missing.

2-Developing: skill appears part of the time.

3-Proficient: skill appears all of the time; you have mastered it on this paper!

Draft # _____