

Paragraphing Note

The four types of writing that we will do this year:

Descriptive: presenting a picture or snapshot of what is seen. (Term One)

Narrative: telling a story. (Term One/Two)

Expository: explaining something or a process. (Term Two)

Persuasive: trying to convince another person to believe something. (Term Three)

Each type of writing can be presented in three ways:

1. A sentence.
2. A paragraph with a minimum of 9 sentences, beginning with an indentation. (one topic sentence, seven body sentences, and one concluding sentence)
3. A short essay, which is a group of three or more paragraphs.

Ways to organize your paragraph:

The chief way in which your writing is organized is by **selecting** details that you want to include and by putting these details in the **order** that you want. This process helps establish your **PERSPECTIVE** - the unique way that each individual person sees, remembers or understands events that have happened.

Here are four ways of selecting and ordering your ideas and perceptions:

1. Act like a movie camera. "**Pan**" across or up or down a scene that you see. What happens is that you produce a "snapshot" of an event or thing that is highly personal. The panning movement isn't always in a straight line. You can move across the scene by dipping up and down or side to side.
2. Choose a part of the scene that really caught your eye. Describe it intensely, then begin to widen your view, like ripples in a pond. This is called choosing a **centre of focus**. The centre does not have to be in the centre of the scene or event you are observing. It should be something that first caught your eye.
3. Tie your description to a personal event or memory and **switch back and forth** between your memory and the story you are telling or the scene you are describing.
4. Tell the story in the order that the events happened - **chronologically**.

The Descriptive Paragraph

Name:

Date:

Some types of writing tell stories, others argue a position and still others explain a process or idea. Descriptive writing paints a picture of a moment in time, or a scene, using vivid language that draws on sensual impressions. Words that capture a sense of **time and place** and appeal to the **five senses** (taste, touch, smell, sound, sight) fit right into a descriptive paragraph.

The organization of the senses is crucial. The writer of the paragraph is like an interpreter of a foreign language, or a guide to a blindfolded person. The writer controls what the reader will know or experience about the event, moment or scene being described. The first sentence begins with an **indentation** and a general introduction that **frames** the sentences that follow. To achieve **coherency**, a writer should not wander too far from the main idea or **topic** expressed in the introductory sentence. As our guide, she/he should not make us too dizzy.

The body of the paragraph explores the main idea in greater detail in a minimum of three sentences. There should be a pattern in your description, such as a **top to bottom** view, or a **left to right panning** motion. The body sentences should contain the **most evocative language** you know or can find in a thesaurus rather than the tired and routine words and expressions that we use every day in our speech.

The final sentence is a concluding sentence. When you are learning about the structure of a paragraph, it is acceptable to start a concluding sentence with "In conclusion ...". However, you will grow as a writer and improve your work by trying different sentence beginnings to sum up your body sentences or make a final comment on what you have observed. The paragraph should be a minimum of five sentences long, but we will quickly develop paragraphs that are at least nine sentences long.

Evocative language: Write five better words for the typically tired words below.

" big "

" very "

" a lot "

" good "

" cool "

The Descriptive Paragraph 2.0

Name:

Date:

Some writers show what descriptive heights can be reached with the English language. They are able to take a simple observation and develop it into a marvelous word picture that dazzles the imagination. Let's take a look at a passage from Philip Pullman's novel The Amber Spyglass. This section is at the very beginning of the novel (the third part of the "His Dark Materials" story), when a writer needs to capture a new reader for her/his audience. See what you can do with his basic observations. Use the text below and add as many sentences of descriptive detail to develop the simple images. **Fill the lines provided.** Compare your work to Pullman's when you receive the actual text of his work. Remember to use rich language with 5 senses impressions...

(Paragraph One) **"In a valley... lay a cave, half-hidden... ."**

(Paragraph Two) **"The woods were full of sound:"**

(Paragraph Three) **"It was a place of brilliant sunlight... and the light was never still,"**

The Descriptive Paragraph 3.0

Name:

Date:

Glue this page into your Writing notebook.

From Philip Pullman's novel The Amber Spyglass. This section is at the very beginning of the novel (the third part of the *His Dark Materials* series), from the chapter entitled "The Enchanted Sleeper". The **bold underlined** parts are the basic observations you worked from on the previous page.

In a valley shaded with rhododendrons, close to the snow line, where a stream milky with meltwater splashed and where doves and linnets flew among the immense pines, lay a cave, half-hidden by the crag above and the stiff heavy leaves that clustered below.

The woods were full of sound: the stream between the rocks, the wind among the needles of the pine branches, the chitter of insects and the cries of small arboreal mammals, as well as the birdsong; and from time to time a stronger gust of wind would make one of the branches of a cedar or a fir move against another and groan like a cello.

It was a place of brilliant sunlight, never undappled. Shafts of lemon-gold brilliance lanced down to the forest floor between bars and pools of brown-green shade; and the light was never still, never constant, because drifting mist would often float among the treetops, filtering all the sunlight to a pearly sheen and brushing every pine cone with moisture that glistened when the mist lifted. Sometimes the wetness in the clouds condensed into tiny drops half mist and half rain, which floated downward rather than fell, making a soft rustling patter among the millions of needles.

List some of the words from the passage above in each category:

Sight
images:

Sound
images:

Touch
images:

Examples of
rich language:

My favourite
phrases:

The Descriptive Paragraph 4.0

Here is a vocabulary chart to add variety to your everyday writing and your stories.
There is room in each section to add some words you like to use.

Instead of <u>said</u>, use:	Instead of <u>laughed</u>, use:	Instead of <u>ran</u>, use:
called shouted cried whispered responded remarked demanded questioned asked replied stated exclaimed	snickered guffawed giggled cackled roared howled chuckled tittered chortled hee-hawed crowed bellowed	hurried bolted raced darted scurried sped dashed jogged galloped sprinted trotted rushed
Instead of <u>walked</u>, use:	Instead of <u>saw</u>, use:	Instead of <u>like</u>, use:
staggered shuffled traveled sauntered trudged lumbered strutted paraded marched ambled hiked strolled	glimpsed glanced at noticed eyed observed gazed at sighted spied spotted examined stared at watched	love prefer admire cherish appreciate care for fancy favour adore enjoy idolize treasure
Instead of <u>sad</u>, use:	Instead of <u>pretty</u>, use:	Instead of <u>good</u>, use:
downcast unhappy depressed dejected woeful forlorn gloomy melancholy miserable crestfallen sorrowful mournful	beautiful exquisite lovely gorgeous glamorous stunning attractive handsome elegant striking cute fair	great splendid pleasant superb marvelous grand delightful terrific superior amazing wonderful excellent
Instead of <u>little</u>, use:	Instead of <u>nice</u>, use:	Instead of <u>funny</u>, use:
teeny small cried whispered responded remarked demanded questioned asked replied stated exclaimed	kind congenial benevolent agreeable thoughtful courteous gracious warm considerate cordial decent humane	farcical hysterical jocular side-splitting amusing hilarious humorous laughable witty silly wonderful nonsensical
Instead of <u>big</u>, use:	Instead of <u>happy</u>, use:	Instead of <u>smart</u>, use:
towering enormous large tremendous huge massive great giant gigantic colossal mammoth immense	glad merry jovial contented jubilant pleased joyful delighted thrilled jolly cheerful elated	witty ingenious bright sharp quick-witted brainy knowledgeable brilliant intelligent gifted clever wise