



Paper Due?
Why Suffer?
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DESCRIPTIVE ESSAYS

1. PERSON

TASK: Write a description about a relative that you feel particularly close to.

(Refer to the topic in the introduction. Say who the person is. Mention your connection to the person)

I feel particularly close to my oldest brother, Jonathan. Although Jonathan is only five years older than me, I sometimes feel like he is my more like a father to me, than a brother.

(Physical description)

Some people say that we look very much alike. Yet, I know that they are just trying to be polite because I don't have green eyes like Jonathan has, and neither do I have his height or broad shoulders. He always stands up straight and he walks like he owns the world. Perhaps that is why girls find him so irresistible and phone him all the time.

(Characteristics, behavior)

Jonathan is a soldier in the air force. I can't wait for him to come home from his base on weekends. He always brings me something small from the canteen. He comes in with laughter and jokes. Although he is popular and very busy with his friends, he always takes the time to ask me about my week, give me advice and sometimes a lecture about doing better in school.

(General conclusion)

When he goes back to the base the house seems so empty, as if Jonathan takes up a lot of space. The three weeks that he is away seem so long to me.

VOCABULARY

PHYSICAL: young/ youngster, teenager, adolescent, middle-aged, elderly, tall, short, average height/ weight, thin, skinny, fat, plump, medium build, stocky, muscular, ordinary, handsome, beautiful, pretty, brown-eyed, blond hair, well-dressed, sloppy, elegant, casual, broad shoulders, beer-belly, figure

CHARACTER: optimistic, pessimistic, happy, cheerful, good-natured, shy, unhappy, depressed, outgoing, kind, sincere, generous, determined, lazy, hard-working, ambitious, creative, secretive, popular,

COMPARISONS: eyes like sapphires, as graceful as a swan, the movements of a dancer, child-like innocence

2. OBJECT

TASK: Describe a birthday present that you were very happy/ unhappy to receive.

(Refer to the topic in the introduction. Say what the object is. Who does it belong to?)

It was my sixth birthday. My grandmother told me to close my eyes. It is hard to describe my happy feelings of expectation as she handed me a parcel wrapped in colorful paper, and then told me to open my eyes. I excitedly ripped off the paper. It was a dressing-gown.

(Physical description)

The dressing gown was a vomit-like green color. It was made from some kind of fuzzy material that was unpleasant to touch. It even seemed to smell of old flowers and mothballs. It was long, with buttons all the way down the front and a belt made out of the same disgusting green fabric.

(Uses, qualities)

Disappointment hit me in the pit of my stomach. I had expected a birthday present that I could play with, like a doll or tea-party set. I remember crying and my parents yelling at me for not saying thank you for the gift. I threw the wretched gown onto the floor and it lay there like an oozing green puddle on the red carpet. I didn't want to touch it. I hated it. I vowed that I would never let it touch any part of my body.

(General conclusion)

I never ever wore that disgusting dressing gown. I also never received a doll or a teaset. I wonder what eventually happened to that dressing gown?

VOCABULARY

PHYSICAL: new ,old, antique, ancient, big, huge, enormous, tiny, small, heavy, light, smooth, smelly, fragrant, ordinary,

CHARACTER: disgusting, terrible, awful, horrible, horrendous, horrifying, great, fantastic, fabulous, wonderful, terrific, marvelous

COMPARISONS: smelled like roses, as smooth as glass,

3. PLACE

TASK: Describe one of the places that you like to go to with your friends.

(Refer to the topic in the introduction. Say what the place is. Where is it? What do you think about the place?)

My friends and I spend hours together. Like most other teenagers our age, we meet in many places, but we tend to spend most nights at the park in my neighborhood.

(Physical description, scenery, location, geography)

The park is actually not very big, but it has lots of shaded, secluded corners where you can speak to your friends in privacy or without being seen. There are lots of benches and a few tables where we can sit, or just lie under one of the many low trees that are found in the park. The park has flowers and some swings and slides for small children, but we hardly notice those things.

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(Things to do there, people, activities)

In fact, we don't go to the park for its beauty. We go to the park because there is no better place to meet one's friends without the watchful eyes of our parents. We can do whatever we feel like doing there. It is a place of freedom. It also doesn't cost money to go there. Couples meet at the park. Teenagers gather in groups. We hang out there most summer nights, and even meet there on the coldest winter nights. We think of it as "our" park and know that we will always find other youngsters there.

(General conclusion/ opinion about the place)

The park isn't just a place to me. It is a place of fun, where I meet my friends and feel free and happy.

VOCABULARY

PHYSICAL FEATURES: mountain, lake, river, sea, valley, coast, beach, north, south, east, west,

APPEARANCE: picturesque, charming, busy, city, urban, buildings, castles, sites, concerts, markets, malls, museums, quiet, country, rural, scenery, view

4. EVENT

TASK: Write a description about your latest family dinner or other family gathering.

(Sets the scene: Answers the WH questions, WHO, WHERE, WHEN)

Every Friday night my mother, father, brother and sister eat dinner at my grandparents' home. My uncles and their families also come. We are

usually between ten to sixteen people sitting around the dining room table, each of us in his or her usual place.

(Why and How, the events, more about the characters)

While my grandfather says the Kiddush, the blessings on the wine and bread, we are as quiet as mice, but the moment that he finishes, we all begin chattering like birds at the same time. My grandmother spends two days cooking before we come, so the food is varied, tasty and plentiful.

So much so, that last week the table broke. As my aunt put the turkey on the table, one of the legs of the table gave way. Everything went crashing onto the floor. My cousin was covered from head to toes in beef stew. There was food on the floor, on the walls, on our laps. My grandmother was absolutely speechless and it looked as if she was about to cry, and then we heard a giggle...and another...and finally there was laughter...and more laughter. We all began laughing and pointing at each other...it was contagious....even grandmother began laughing...

(The ending of the story)

Our family meetings aren't just about food; they are about family communication and being there for each other. That Friday night we didn't eat much, but we cleaned up the mess together.

USE THE PAST TENSES TO DESCRIBE PAST EVENTS

VOCABULARY

TIME EXPRESSIONS: when, while, as, during, then, after, ago, last, before, until, suddenly, all of a sudden, at first, in the beginning, to begin with, next, secondly, later, soon, in the mean time, meanwhile, finally, in the end, that night, all day, yesterday, at approximately, earlier,

USE YOUR FIVE SENSES WHEN YOU WRITE A DESCRIPTIVE ESSAY:

SMELL

odor, scent, sniff, whiff; aroma, bouquet, fragrance, perfume; spice, tang, foulness, stench, stink; incense, musk **SEE**

behold, discern, distinguish, eye, look (at), note, notice, observe, perceive, regard, remark, sight, spy, view, witness, identify, make out, pick out; attend (to), consider, heed, mark, mind; study, watch; examine, inspect, scan, scrutinize, survey; glance (at), glimpse, peer (at)

Phrases: get a load of [*slang*], lay eyes on, set eyes on

TOUCH

feel, embrace, fondle, hug, paw, rub, stroke; brush, graze; clasp, clench, cling (to), clutch, grasp, grip, handle, hold, palm; chuck, clap, dab, flick, pat, tag, tap, tip; hit, knock, beat, pound, rap, whack, soft, hard, gentle, lovingly, course,

TASTE

flavor, savor, relish, smack, tang, tastiness; aftertaste, bitter, sweet, sour, salty, spicy, like a peach, peppermint,

HEAR

listen, attend, hark, hear, hearken, heed, mind, beat, sound, rhythm, music, pulse, drum, throb; lilt, movement, sway, whoosh, drones like a bee, roars like a dragon,

Phrases: prick up one's ears

When writing a descriptive essay, use:

vivid, fresh and varied language

bright examples interesting

comparisons a variety of terms

images that appeal to senses

senses free play of feelings and

emotions

REMEMBER TO CREATE A PICTURE WITH WORDS

Important!

You may be asked to write a descriptive essay. Be sure you do just that: describe. If you are describing your best friend, for example, don't talk about how you were hurt on the soccer field and how you were rushed to the hospital and how you were scared to death of the doctors and then maybe add a few words about her and how she helped you. The assignment is to describe her. For example:

My best friend is a really incredible human being. Although he has only been in Israel for three years (He is originally from the U.S.), one

would never suspect that he was not born and raised here. Aside from having a perfect command of Hebrew, he is totally a part of the local teenage culture. He is well-liked by just about everyone. He is a fine athlete, he plays the piano and the guitar and he is the coolest person I know. In addition, he is an excellent student and has big plans for the future, all of which, I am certain will materialize.

But perhaps the most important quality he has is his ability to be a true friend. I know he will always be there when I need him. He knows how to keep a confidence and I feel I can tell him absolutely anything. He has a lot of common sense and is able to look at any situation objectively. I know I can trust his good judgment to give me sound advice.

Sum up in the last paragraph.

***You may be asked to write a formal letter.

You **must** use the correct format for the formal letter. You were given examples describing this format in detail. Find it. Read it. Learn it.

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