

Knowledge Organiser: Descriptive Writing



Purpose

- To use a range of techniques to build up a picture in the mind of the reader.
- Often used as part of a larger text, notably in narrative (story) writing.

Audience

- Any reader who needs a detailed mental picture of the setting.

General Structure

- Introduction which broadly introduces the scene.
- Points and elaborations (paragraphs) which each focus on a different aspect of the scene, describing it in detail.
- Ending which links back to the introduction.

Structural Techniques

- **Telescopic:** where the description starts as if viewed from a distance and each paragraph then zooms in.
- **Contrasting perspectives:** where the same scene is described from different point of view e.g. from a bird's eye view and that of an ant.
- **Contrasting seasons:** where the same scene is described in different seasons e.g. in summer and winter.

Descriptive Techniques

- A wide variety of sentence structures
- Similes, metaphors and personification
- Careful verb choices
- Use of the five senses

- Use of a semantic field

Key Vocabulary

Fronted adverbials		A word or phrase at the beginning of a sentence which tells the reader about the time, place, manner, frequency or possibility of the event in the sentence.
Subordinating conjunctions		Words or phrases which start a subordinate clause and link it to the main clause. e.g. I SAW A WABUB
Relative clauses		A clause starting with a relative pronoun (Who/Where/Which/that) that tells the reader more about the noun.
Embedded clauses		A clause in the middle of a sentence between two commas that tells the reader extra information.
Simile		To describe something as being similar to something else using the words 'like' or 'as...as'
Metaphor		Describing something by saying it is something else.
Personification		A type of metaphor which gives human traits to objects
Onomatopoeia		words which sound like the noise they refer to.
five senses		taste, smell, touch, sight and hearing
Semantic field		using one theme for the imagery within a piece of writing
Sentence structure		how a sentence is put together