

# Descriptive *Writing*

**Topics Include:**

People, Places, Objects,  
Events, Impressions,  
Specifications

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## To the Student



*How about it?  
Can you count on your  
writing skills to make  
your meaning clear?*

*Check yourself out  
by answering the  
following questions!*

- ▶ Can you give other people easy-to-follow directions and explanations?

**EXAMPLES:** **how to tape a TV show**  
**how a bill becomes law**

- ▶ Can you describe something clearly enough to create a vivid image in the minds of your audience?

**EXAMPLES:** **a dramatic thunderstorm**  
**a movie star's mansion**

- ▶ Can you tell a story so well that your audience is fascinated from beginning to end?

**EXAMPLES:** **the history of baseball**  
**the world's worst date**

- ▶ Can you usually persuade others to accept your opinion or take some kind of action?

**EXAMPLES:** **see a certain movie**  
**register to vote**

Saddleback's WRITING 4 series will improve your written work—no matter what your purpose is for writing. If you make your best effort, the result will surprise you. You'll discover that putting words on paper isn't that much different from saying words out loud. The thought processes and grammatical structures are the same. Writing is just another form of expression; skill develops with practice!

Competent writers do better at school and at work. Keep that in mind as you work your way through these books. If you learn to write well, you're more likely to succeed in whatever you want to do!

*Are you ready to go for it?  
Follow me—I'm off and running!*



# Lesson

# 1

## Using Vivid Nouns

*Nouns* are words that name persons, places, things, or events. Good writers choose nouns that are specific rather than general. The word *dog*, for example, does not give the reader an exact mental picture. A specific noun such as *whippet*, *greyhound*, *Dalmatian*, or *cocker spaniel* would create a much more precise image.

**A.** Rewrite each sentence, replacing the underlined word with a more specific noun that creates a clearer picture.

1. Please pass the vegetables.

---

2. We went to a restaurant for dinner on Saturday.

---

3. After dinner, we split a dessert.

---

4. Patrick bought a new car.

---

5. Jean lives in a place with an ocean view.

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6. The game started at 3 o'clock.

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7. We saw an interesting animal at the zoo.

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8. Tom and Bob fished from a boat.

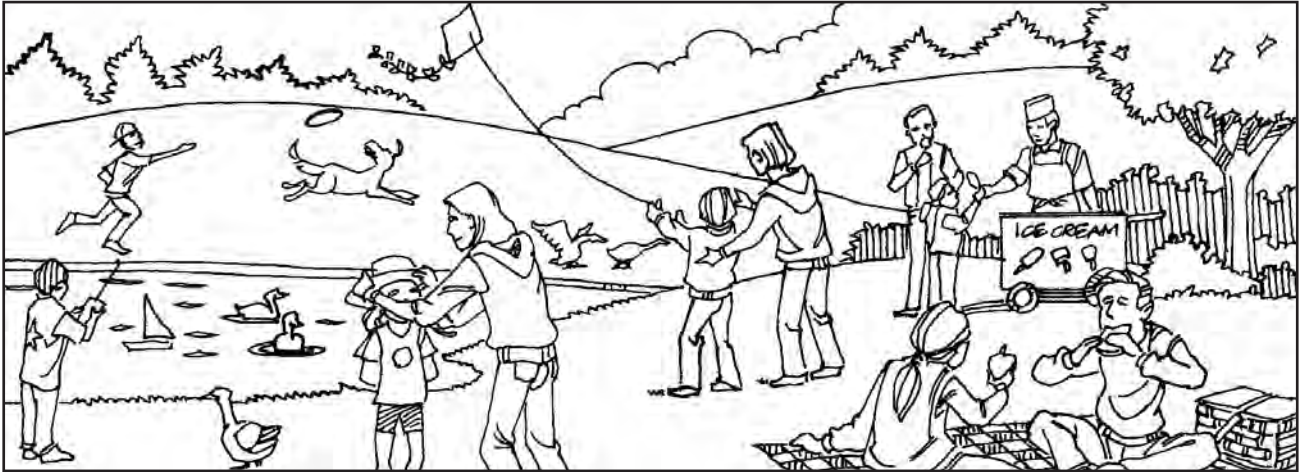
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9. Gloria's pet is cute and friendly.

---

10. The machine made a lot of noise.

---



**B.** This picture shows a typical day in a park. Suppose you want to describe this scene to someone else. Where would you start? You might begin with vivid nouns. Make a list of nouns that could be used in a description of this picture.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**C.** Now use some or all of the nouns you listed to write a description of the picture. Make sure your nouns are specific enough to help your reader visualize the scene.

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# Lesson 2

## Using Vivid Verbs

Good writers use strong, specific verbs to express action. Why? Precise verbs make it easier for the reader to imagine the action. Sometimes, strong verbs can give clues about a character's motivations or feelings. To see how a vivid verb can clarify meaning and bring a picture into focus, compare these two sentences:

*The football team came onto the field for their final game.*

*The football team bolted onto the field for their final game.*

Notice that the verb *bolted* gives the reader a sense of the players' determination. It also helps you imagine how emotionally charged up the team was.

**A.** Rewrite each of the following sentences, replacing the underlined word with a more vivid verb.

1. The couple moved on the dance floor.

---

2. Allan went out the front door.

---

3. Barbara got out of bed at 6 o'clock in the morning.

---

4. The child walked through the rain puddles.

---

5. The lioness looked for a meal for her family.

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6. Chris drank a glass of ice water.

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7. The fat cat slept by the fire.

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8. All of a sudden, the police came in the door.

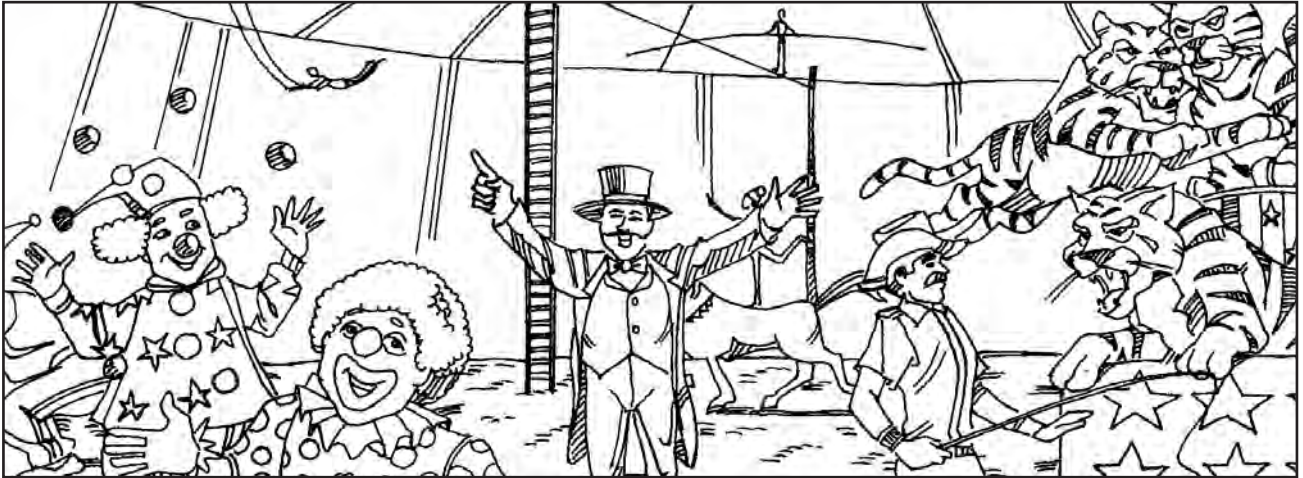
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9. The out-of-control car went into the concrete wall.

---

10. The hungry man ate a sandwich.

---



**B.** This picture shows a typical scene at a circus. Suppose you want to describe the picture to someone else. Where would you start? You might begin with vivid verbs. Make a list of verbs that could be used in a description of this picture.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**C.** Now use some or all of the verbs you listed in a written description of the picture. Make sure your verbs are specific enough to help your reader visualize the scene.

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# Lesson

# 3

## Using Vivid Adjectives

*Adjectives* are words that give more information about nouns or pronouns. Writers use adjectives to describe colors, shapes, and sizes as well as tastes, sounds, smells, and feelings. Read the two example sentences. Notice how adjectives help the reader visualize what is being described:

*Isabel purchased a thick green blanket.*

*Myron served a hearty vegetable stew.*

**A.** Read each sentence. First, circle all adjectives that describe colors, shapes, or sizes. Then rewrite each sentence, changing the adjectives to create a very different visual picture. The first one has been done for you.

1. Daria wore a shimmery pastel shawl.

*Daria wore a tattered brown shawl.*

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2. Dennis painted a large red flower on the round canvas.
- 

3. The bright blue butterfly hovered over the delicate white orchids.
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4. Rocko is a tiny white puppy.
- 

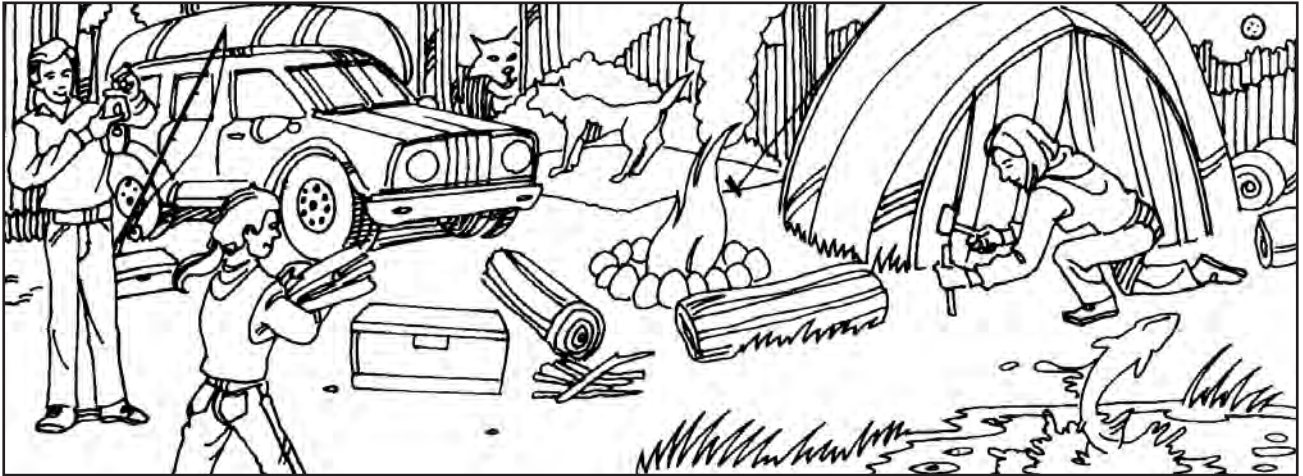
**B.** Read each sentence. First, circle all adjectives that describe sounds, tastes, smells, or feelings. Then rewrite each sentence, changing the adjectives to create a very different visual picture.

1. The noisy children played in the fragrant garden.
- 

2. The hungry man wolfed down the spicy enchiladas.
- 

3. Maria was too tired to enjoy the festive celebration.
- 

4. A quiet hush fell over the mournful crowd.
-



**C.** This picture shows a typical scene at a campsite. Suppose you want to describe the picture to someone else. Where would you start? You might begin with vivid adjectives. Make a list of adjectives that could be used in a description of this picture.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**D.** Now use some or all of the adjectives you listed in a written description of the picture. Make sure your adjectives are specific enough to help your reader visualize the scene.

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