

Grade 7 English Worksheet

Assessment Task: Descriptive paragraph writing

Paragraph writing

Introduction

Writers arrange their sentences in paragraphs to make it easier for readers to understand what is being discussed or happening. Paragraphs may vary in length. (Some are long; some are short – even as short as one sentence!)

A paragraph groups a related set of ideas together. Think of speaking – whenever you change the topic or subject, you would pause. In writing, whenever you change the topic or subject, leave a line. Paragraphs usually begin with a topic sentence that indicates what the paragraph is about. However, the topic sentence does not always have to be the first sentence in a new paragraph. The remainder of your paragraph then expands on the topic.

Read the following two paragraphs.

Paragraph A

I was strolling through the park on a cold morning. I heard a noise that sounded like a cat. I saw a man climbing a tree to help it down.

Paragraph B

The sudden eerie sound from high above was as piercing as the wind that was beginning to blow leaves around my feet. I looked up, unlike the other oblivious pedestrians who had their heads buried in the woollen collars of their jackets to keep warm. Then I saw him – perched on a twig among the blistery brown leaves. Terrified, it spat and hissed in fear and anger. It was then that I noticed the old man balancing precariously on a bench with outstretched arms trying to save the little feline.

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Question 1

Discuss in class with teacher:

Do both paragraphs have the same theme/topic?

Question 2

Divide your page in half and give a detailed sketch of the image created by the words you have read.

Draw paragraph A on the left side and paragraph B on the right side.

Question 3

Why does one drawing have more detail than the other?

Question 4

Identify the figure of speech use in the phrase 'blistery brown' and state its effectiveness.

Question 5

Choose one of the following simple, mundane incidents on which to write a descriptive paragraph. Describe your feelings, surroundings, and the events that occurred in each situation posed. Try to use strong verbs and descriptive adjectives.

1. I had forgotten to complete my Maths homework and knew this was the day I would be punished.

Or:

2. As I opened the examination paper, I realised I had studied for the wrong exam....

Or:

3. It was the assembly during which the prefects/leaders/executives were to be announced and I was feeling....

Use the rubric as a guide before you begin writing.

Plan your work in rough first.

A peer will edit your work and assess your paragraph according to the rubric below.

Rewrite your paragraph neatly.

Your work will then be assessed by the teacher, based on the rubric below, to compare outcomes.

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Rubric for descriptive paragraph

	1-3 Marks	4 Marks	5-6 Marks	7-8 Marks	9 Marks	10 Marks
Planning and sentence structure	No planning. Incoherent. Poor sentence structure. Content meaningless.	Some evidence of planning. Some errors in sentence structure. No introduction. Poorly constructed.	Insufficient planning. Few errors in sentence structure. Poor introduction. Sentences only structured randomly.	Some planning. Some weak sentences. Some errors in structure.	Evidence of planning. Adequate introduction. Good sentence structure.	Thorough planning. Effective introduction. Excellent sentence structure.
Originality	No originality. Difficult to understand.	Writing muddled. Mundane.	Some attempt at originality. Few adjectives used.	Original in several parts. Good use of adjectives.	Highly original: Opening or closing statements effective.	Outstanding and creative. Unique opening and closing statements.
Grammar	No application of grammar. Incomprehensible.	Many errors. Limited vocabulary.	Adequate but some common errors evident.	Good in parts. Wide range of vocabulary.	Good except for a few grammatical errors. Wide range of vocabulary. Good use of figurative language.	Outstanding use of vocabulary, spelling and punctuation and figurative language.
Evidence of process writing	No proofreading, editing.	Some evidence of proofreading and editing.	Some errors corrected.	Accurate for the most part.	Errors eliminated.	Superior quality achieved through planning.

[40 marks]

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Suggested Solutions

Discussion in class with teacher:

Question number	Possible marks	Solution
1	(Oral work)	Yes Open answer
2		Drawing: Paragraph A: park, man climbing tree, cat in tree. Drawing: Paragraph B: person with leaves around feet, pedestrians huddled in jackets, creature among twigs and leaves on tree, old man on bench with arms stretched out.
3		More adjectives were used to provide a more detailed description.
4		Alliteration. Creates mood of wind blowing severely.
5		See rubric in Appendix of Assessment Tools.

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Appendix of Assessment Tools

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	1-3 Marks	4 Marks	5-6 Marks	7-8 Marks	9 Marks	10 Marks
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[40 marks]