Descriptive Essay Examples

Model Short Descriptive Essays

Bonebag

My oldest friend in Taiwan is my dog, Bonebag. I found her at a construction site in Hsiaokang in 1997. She is both beautiful and cowardly.

She has long yellow-white fur, pointy ears and a long snout. Her head comes to my knees. From the tip of her nose to the tip of her long tail, she is about four feet long. She loves to go for walks, but she is easily frightened by loud noises and commotion. Sometimes, she gets so scared that she runs away. I used to go looking for her, but now I just wait for her to find her way home. She always does, even if she does not know the day.

Bonebag is a very good-looking dog, but also a big chicken. Like all my friends, she has strengths and weaknesses. They make her interesting. (141)

Hsiaokang High School

I have taught English in six high schools in Kaohsiung City. One of them is Hsiaokang High School. HKHS has a unique design.

From the front, HKHS looks like a typical high school in Taiwan. It has a tall central building with a long wing on each side and a wide entrance underneath it. From the entrance, it looks very different from other high schools. Instead of opening onto an open area, it runs deep into the rest of the school. All of the walkways from front to back, side to side and top to bottom are covered. Students and teachers can get from any office, classroom, lab or library to any other without being burned by the sun or soaked by the rain. Only the left and right fourth floor, walkways are open to the sky, but they have thick arches that reduce sun and rain.

Not many high schools in Kaohsiung City have such an effective all-weather design. School architects should learn from it. (166)

A Garden of Delights

My father likes to garden. He has almost always had a vegetable garden to work in. The garden I remember best was the one at 21825, 124th Avenuet in Maple Ridge, B.C.

21825 was an old farmhouse on a very large piece of land. All around the property there were many trees, including two tall evergreens and several fruit trees. We had a couple of crab apple trees, whose apples were small, hard, dry and slightly sour, a plum tree and two cherry trees. We also had a grape vine with very sour marble-sized green grapes, a rhubarb plant and a horse radish plant. In the spring, my father planted lettuce, cabbage, tomatoes, peas, carrots, corn, string beans, radishes, potatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, celery and turnips. He planted a lot of everything and it all grew well, so we had plenty of fresh vegetables in the late summer and early fall. We also had plenty of fruit.

I miss that old farmhouse and its huge garden. I am sure my dad does, too. (172)

The Smell of Home

Every house has its own smell. We seldom notice the smell of our own home, but we certainly notice the smells of other people's homes. My home has many smells.

My home smells like the people who live in it. It smells of pee on the toilet, because all three of my sons frequently aim badly when they go to the bathroom standing up. It smells of perfume, because my wife puts a lot of it on when she goes out. It smells of sweat, because I exercise in my office and get really hot there in the summer. It smells of dog fur and cat litter. It smells of books and computers. It smells of salad dressing, yogurt, baking bread, olive oil and fried fish. It also smells of dust, because my wife and I believe in living more than in cleaning.

It is nice to get away from home once in a while, but it is also nice to come back. One reason is that home smells like home. It smells familiar. It smells like us. (178)

Spider Webs

One of nature's great killers is also one of its great artists. Spiders are carnivores who as a genus feed on everything from flies to rats. Many of them catch their prey with webs of great complexity and beauty.

Spider webs are so common that we often hardly notice them. They hang in corners and stretch between trees or fence posts. Most of them are difficult to see unless they get wet or dusty. When we do see them, we wonder that so small a creature with so small a brain could so accurately weave such an intricate pattern of threads running back and forth like the spokes of a wheel. A dew-covered web sparkling in the bright morning sun is one of the most memorable sights in anyone's life.

Few people can recreate in pencil, paint or string even the most basic design found in the most commonplace of works. Spider webs are the snowflakes of the animal world. (160)

Mom

People age and their looks change, but we often remember them as they used to be. When I think of my mother, I see her as she was when I was a boy. She was a beauty.

Hair styles changed many times while I was growing up, and my mother's did, too, but I usually think of her with her hair done up in a beehive. She had wavy, dark brown hair and hazel eyes. Her face was a slightly rectangular oval, which made her look both gentle and strong. She had high, arching eyebrows and a triangular, slightly turned up nose. Her chin was smooth and feminine. She was not very tall, about five feet six inches, but she was slim and graceful, so I never thought of her as short compared to other adults. She was proud to be a woman and always wore feminine clothing. Her eyes and smile also radiated pride in who and what she was.

Like many North American women, she has become overweight and age has blurred the clean lines of youth, but whenever I look at my mother, I still see the young, attractive woman I grew up adoring. (197)

Taiwan's Riviera

Most of the coast of Taiwan is covered with busy industrial cities. The country is small and has to work hard to maintain a good standard of living. However, the Taiwanese play just as hard as they work, and one of their favorite places to play is Kenting.

Kenting National Park is on the south coast, between the mountains and the sea. There are gentle, green slopes to climb and hike, and long, sandy beaches to lie on. The warm Pacific waters wash soothingly against the sand and rocks. The warm Pacific breezes smell of rest and adventure, not seaweed and ships. The shops, restaurants and hotels that line the main road offer something for every taste and budget. The town of Kenting features one of the longest and most festive night markets on the island.

Kenting is a favorite with both locals and foreigners. Nearly everyone who lives on or visits the island goes there at least twice. (159)

Kaohsiung City

Kaohsiung City is the second most important city in Taiwan. It has a major port and is home to one-and-a-half million people. Kaohsiung is both beautiful and ugly.

The city lies on the southwest coast of the main island of Taiwan. Most of the land in and around the city is more or less flat, but there are two small mountains near the sea. Both mountains are green with trees. Looked at from either mountain, the city looks like nothing but buildings with a few trees here and there, but actually there are many parks all over the city. Some are very small. Some are very big. All of the parks have trees and flowers in them. There are many, many buildings in the city and many of them are quite tall. Two of them are very tall. The old 50-storey Changgu Tower looks like a Japanese robot. The new 85-storey Taimaru Tower looks like a blue rocket about to take off. The Lover River winds through the city like a dirty and smelly snake. Slowly the river and other parts of the city are being cleaned up and made very pleasant.

Kaohsiung is a busy, modern city with its eyesores and bad odors, but it is also a changing city with more and more parks and interesting architecture. I am happy and proud to live there. (227)

Teacher Mark

My cram school English teacher is very different from all my other teachers. He does not look or sound like them. He is a foreigner.

He speaks English with a North American accent. He speaks Chinese with a foreign accent. He has a big nose and blue eyes. He has wavy, dark brown hair and white skin.

Teacher Mark does not look or sound Chinese. He is a European from Canada. (71)

Garbage Trucks

Garbage trucks are important. Every day, they collect the city's garbage. Garbage trucks are easy to recognize.

We can hear a garbage truck coming, because it plays a special song. We can see when it is coming, because it is bright yellow. We can smell when it has come, because it smells like rotten garbage. The back of the garbage truck is round at the top, because of a machine called a crusher that squeezes all the garbage together to make it fit in the truck.

No other truck sounds, looks or smells like a garbage truck. People are happy when it come and happy when it goes. (108)

The Mango

Tropical fruit is probably the most attractive in the world. It is colorful, fragrant and tasty. In many people's minds, the most colorful, fragrant and tasty of all fruit is the mango.

Mangoes come in many sizes and colors. Some are bright green, some are bright yellow, some are bright orange and some are bright red. Some are even all four colors at once. That is just the skin. The flesh is usually bright yellow or orange. You can smell a ripe mango several meters away. It smells like a delicious edible flower. It is smooth and just slightly soft in the hand. When you peel it, the juice drips like sweet, sticky nectar down your fingers and forearms to your elbows. When you bite into the mango, your mouth explodes with fruity sugar.

The mango is the king of fruit for many reasons. It is a garden of color, aroma and flavor. (153)

Weiwuying Metropolitan Park

Kaohsiung City has many parks. The newest one is Weiwuying Metropolitan Park. It is a large and interesting park.

It is called Weiwuying, because the place where it was built used to be an army barracks. The grounds of the barracks were long and wide, so the park is also long and wide. I think it must be nearly a kilometer long and only slightly less wide. The barracks had many big, old banyan trees and they are all still there as well as many younger, smaller trees. In the middle of the park there is a huge pond with a powerful fountain. All around the park there are structures like bridges, lookout towers, exercise equipment and sandboxes. Long, winding paths criss-cross the park from end to end and side to side. At night you can hear frogs and cicadas croaking and singing to each other.

Weiwuying Metropolitan Park is a great place for a jog, a stroll or a bike ride. I often take my family there on Sunday evenings. (169)

My Secret Self

A lot of people know me, because I have taught English in many places over many years. However, very few people know me well. There is a lot more to me than meets the eye.

To most people, I probably look like a typical European adult male. I am not very tall, but am also not very short. I am not fat, but I am also not thin. I suppose you could say I am slightly below average height for a twenty-first century Caucasian man and that I have a slim, wiry build. Beneath my ordinary appearance, however, I have many extraordinary talents and accomplishments. I am good at music, languages, thinking and writing. I sing and play guitar and have written a hundred or more songs, many of which I have recorded. I speak English, French, Russian and Mandarin, but I have also studied Spanish, German, Hebrew, Arabic, Greek, Ukrainian, Taiwanese and Japanese. As an English teacher, I am always trying to better understand how people learn languages. I have developed many models, paradigms, tools and techniques to help me teach better. Someday I plan to be a published author. I have already written or begun writing over forty different novels and short stories. I have more ideas for stories than I have time to write. My imagination is full of people, places and situations that do not exist.

Most people who look at me probably see nothing special. People who know me well see a talented person with a powerful mind. (253)

The Night Sky

In most parts of the world, the sun goes down every evening. After an often thrilling sunset, the sky turns black. The blackness reveals many things that are hidden by the light of day.

The night sky is full of lights. If you look up at night in the country, you can see millions of tiny white points. Some are very faint. Others are very bright. Many of them are close together in a fuzzy line called the Milky Way. Most of the white lights are stars, but a few are planets. Some of the planets glow in other colors. Mars glows red. Mercury glows green. Venus glows blue. By far the biggest light in the night sky is the Moon. Sometimes it is a round ball. Sometimes it is a crescent or semi-circle. It is usually silver-white. Its surface is pitted and scarred. The Moon, stars and planets move across the sky as the night passes and the year wears on.

Night is a time of great beauty and interest. Much of its beauty and interest is in the sky. (181)

Inside My Pencil Case

Every student has a pencil case. Most students use their pencil case to carry writing utensils. My pencil case contains a colorful variety of writing utensils.

In my pencil case there are eight pens, an eraser, a whiteout dispenser, a ruler, a crayon, two pencils, and two pencil lead dispensers. Six of my pens are ballpoint pens. Three of the ballpoint pens are curvy Uni-Ball Signos. One is green, one is red, and one is blue. The fourth ballpoint pen is a blocky light blue Pilot Hi-Tec-C. The fifth one is a classy black Regal. The sixth is a transparent Pilot Hu-Tec-C click pen with blue and black ink cartridges. The other two pens are a silver and gray fine-tipped marking pen and a gray-black Pilot Hi-Techpoint V5 with extra fine tip. The eraser is a white rubber

with a blue-, black- and white-striped cardboard wrapper. The whiteout dispenser is white with green trim and has a transparent cover over the spools. The 16-centimeter ruler is dirty white with black gradations and a monkey face on one side. The crayon is orange and comes in a clear plastic holder that twists at one end to control the length of the tip at the other end. One of the pencils is camouflage green with eleven lead cartridges stacked inside. The other is a clear plastic mechanical pencil with a cap. The two lead dispensers are both white and squarish with clear plastic on one side to show the long, thin black pencil leads inside.

The contents of my pencil case are fairly ordinary. They show that I am a practical student who likes a dash of color. (277)

My Dad

My dad is my hero. I have always looked up to him. He is a great man in his way.

My father is a good husband. He helps my mother around the house. He does laundry, washes dishes and fixes things that are broken. When I was a boy, he renovated our house. I felt very proud when he let me help him. It made me feel good to be trusted to do such important work and to spend so much time with my hero. He is a good father who pays attention to his children, teaches them important skills, and encourages them to be great by his words of counsel and his own example.

When I think of great people, I think of people who use their time and talents to help others. My dad is one of the greatest people I know. (144)

Firewood Mountain

The almost uniform flatness of Kaohsiung City is broken by three mountains. The most popular of these is Chaishan, or “Firewood” Mountain. This mountain is a favorite destination of local hikers.

Firewood Mountain is joined at the hip with its Siamese twin, Shoushan, or “Longevity” Mountain. Both rise steeply from the surrounding urban sprawl like rough emeralds in a pile of Lego blocks. Firewood Mountain is slightly steeper and taller, ending in a pronounced peak. Like its twin, it is covered in dense, lush green tropical trees and is home to the nomadic troops of Formosan macaques that give the two mountains their better-known joint English name, Monkey Mountain. Steep trails, invisible unless you are on them, wind up Firewood Mountain on all sides, but most hikers start their two-to-four-hour treks from the official entrance next to a picturesque monastery at the base of the mountain. The more gradually ascending trails are made safer and easier by a well-kept system of boardwalks, but there are many rugged natural trails for those who prefer a challenge. At intervals on most trails are a variety of crude rest stops. Halfway to the summit are two “tea stations” where clean drinking water and an assortment of teas are offered at no charge and where the fitness-obsessed will find all manner of exercise equipment to play on.

Firewood Mountain rests the eye as you gaze across the city and the soul as you bask in its jungle-like atmosphere. No wonder the busy people of Kaohsiung flock there each weekend. (255)

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