



**The Minnesota Literacy Council created this curriculum with funding from the MN Department of Education. We invite you to adapt it for your own classrooms.**

## **MASTER**

### **Descriptive Writing: Week 1 of 1 (3-day unit)**

#### **Unit Overview:**

This is a 1 week unit during which students will do supported, intensive writing practice. During each class session students will spend time getting ideas and thoughts about what to write, see example writing, produce their own writing and get feedback about their writing.

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#### **Unit Objectives:**

**During this unit students will...**

- see various examples of writing in English at their own level
- have significant practice producing their own writing in English
- gain more confidence expressing written ideas in English
- receive feedback from teachers and peers on their writing

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**Unit Outline:**

Monday: Labor Day (no class)

Tuesday: Describing myself

Wednesday: Describing my country

Thursday: Describing my plans for the future

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**Descriptive Writing: Tuesday, Week 1 of 1**  
**Describing Myself**

Lesson Objectives:	Materials
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>brainstorm ideas</b> for their own writing</li> <li>• <b>see an example</b> of student writing</li> <li>• <b>write</b> a paragraph-length writing.</li> <li>• <b>receive feedback</b> on their writing</li> </ul>	<p>Class materials and handout:</p> <p>Describing me (find at the end of this lesson)</p>
<b>Activity Ideas:</b>	
<p><b><u>Introduction to Topic/Brainstorming:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Describing Me for a list of discussion questions. Put the questions up on the OHP or write them on the board. (Don't hand out the questions on paper yet, because we want students to do some talking before they start writing.)</li> <li>• Go through the questions briefly to make sure everyone understands. You might consider having students ask you the questions and you give your answers to help understanding.</li> <li>• Give students 10 - 15 minutes to answer the questions with a partner or small group.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>See an example:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put the example of student writing from the Describing Me up on the OHP. <b>DO NOT HAND IT OUT TO STUDENTS!</b> They will probably want copies, but if you hand it out, they will likely copy it.</li> <li>• Read it out loud slowly. Give students another couple minutes to read it silently.</li> <li>• Talk about it together, answer any questions, make sure students understand.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Write:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give out questions handout. Have students jot down some answers on the paper.</li> <li>• Next have students use their answers to create a paragraph-style writing like the example they saw. Give them at least 30 minutes to write.</li> <li>• As students write, circulate and offer help with vocabulary, spelling and word order.</li> </ul> <p><b>Alternatives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are short on time, don't have students write their answers on the handout, just use it as a guide to think about what to write in a paragraph.</li> <li>• If you have a mix of writing levels in your class, you might have the lower level students write on the handout first, while the higher students can jump right in to writing a</li> </ul>	

paragraph.

**Feedback:**

- As students finish, have them exchange with another student, read and help each other to make corrections or clarify.
- When a student finishes, take a few moments to read it over yourself, and give some basic feedback.

**Focus only on:**

- basic spelling
- clarification of ideas
- basic sentence structure, i.e. using capital letters and periods.

**DO NOT CORRECT EVERY MISTAKE!** This would be too overwhelming for your students.

## **Describing Me**

1. What is your name?
2. Where are you from?
3. How long have you lived in the U.S.?
4. Who do you live with?
5. Do you have a job? What is your job?
6. What do you like to do in your free time?
7. What foods do you like?
8. What sports do you like?
9. What music do you like?
10. What is important to you?

My name is Jamal Ahmed. I am from Somalia. I live in Minneapolis. I came to Minnesota 6 years ago. Here I live with my mother, father, one sister and two brothers. I also live with the sons of my brother. We are a big family, but we are happy! I have a job. I work in a hotel. I wash dishes in the kitchen. It is a difficult job, but I am happy for my job. It is important to work. I like to work every day. When I am not working, I like to go to the library or the park. I also like to play soccer. I have a good life here in Minneapolis, but I also want to learn more English so I can have a better life.

Write answers to the questions.

1. What is your name?
2. Where are you from?
3. How long have you lived in the U.S.?
4. Who do you live with?
5. Do you have a job? What is your job?
6. What do you like to do in your free time?
7. What foods do you like?
8. What sports do you like?
9. What music do you like?
10. What is important to you?

Now, write your answers on another paper in a paragraph.

## Unit: Wednesday, Week 1 of 1

### Describing my country

Lesson Objectives:	Materials
Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>brainstorm ideas</b> for their own writing</li><li>• <b>see an example</b> of student writing</li><li>• <b>write</b> a paragraph-length writing.</li><li>• <b>receive feedback</b> on their writing</li></ul>	Class materials and handout: Describing my Country (Find at the end of this document)

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Activity Ideas:
<b><u>Introduction to Topic/Brainstorming:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• See Describing my country for a list of discussion questions. Put the questions up on the OHP or write them on the board. (Don't hand out the questions on paper yet, because we want students to do some talking before they start writing.)</li><li>• Go through the questions briefly to make sure everyone understands. You might consider having students ask you the questions and you give your answers to help understanding.</li><li>• Give students 10 - 15 minutes to answer the questions with a partner or small group.</li></ul> <b><u>See an example:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Put the example of student writing from Describing my country up on the OHP. <b>DO NOT HAND IT OUT TO STUDENTS!</b> They will probably want copies, but if you hand it out, they will likely copy it.</li><li>• Read it out loud slowly. Give students another couple minutes to read it silently.</li><li>• Talk about it together, answer any questions, make sure students understand.</li></ul> <b><u>Write:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give out questions handout. Have students jot down some answers on the paper.</li><li>• Next have students use their answers to create a paragraph-style writing like the example they saw. Give them at least 30 minutes to write.</li><li>• As students write, circulate and offer help with vocabulary, spelling and word order.</li></ul> <b>Alternatives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If you are short on time, don't have students write their answers on the handout, just use it as a guide to think about what to write in a paragraph.</li><li>• If you have a mix of writing levels in your class, you might have the lower level students</li></ul>

write on the handout first, while the higher students can jump right in to writing a paragraph.

**Feedback:**

- As students finish, have them exchange with another student, read and help each other to make corrections or clarify.
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When a student finishes, take a few moments to read it over yourself, and give some basic feedback.

**Focus only on:**

- basic spelling
- clarification of ideas
- basic sentence structure, i.e. using capital letters and periods.

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## **Describing my country**

1. What country are you from?
2. Where is your country?
3. What language do people speak in your country?
4. What is the weather like in your country?
5. What are some of the important foods in your country?
6. When are the important holidays in your country?
7. What are some beautiful places in your country?
8. What do you like about your country?
9. What don't you like about your country?

My name is Elena. I am from Spain. In my country, everyone speaks Spanish. Some people also speak other languages, like Catalan. My country is very beautiful. It has different parts. In the north, it is green and rains a lot. In the south, there is the Mediterranean coast, which is very beautiful. In the west, there is the very interesting city of Barcelona. In the east, next to Spain is Portugal. And where I live is in central Spain, the capital city of Madrid. In my country one of the most important foods is paella. This is a food made with rice, seafood, vegetables and other foods all cooked together. It is very delicious and it is very special to eat this food together with your family. We eat paella on New Year's Day, which is a wonderful holiday in Spain. I love my country very much because it has beautiful places and beautiful people.

Write answers to the questions.

1. What country are you from?
2. Where is your country?
3. What language do people speak in your country?
4. What is the weather like in your country?
5. What are some of the important foods in your country?
6. When are the important holidays in your country?
7. What are some beautiful places in your country?
8. What do you like about your country?
9. What don't you like about your country?

Now, write your answers on another paper in a paragraph.

## Unit: Thursday, Week 1 of 1

### Describing my plans for the future

Lesson Objectives:	Materials
<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>brainstorm ideas</b> for their own writing</li><li>• <b>see an example</b> of student writing</li><li>• <b>write</b> a paragraph-length writing.</li><li>• <b>receive feedback</b> on their writing.</li></ul>	<p>Class materials and handout: Describing my plans for the future (at the end of this lesson)</p>
<b>Activity Ideas:</b>	
<b><u>Introduction to Topic/Brainstorming:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• See Describing my plans for the future for a list of discussion questions. Put the questions up on the OHP or write them on the board. (Don't hand out the questions on paper yet, because we want students to do some talking before they start writing.)</li><li>• Go through the questions briefly to make sure everyone understands. You might consider having students ask you the questions and you give your answers to help understanding.</li><li>• Give students 10 - 15 minutes to answer the questions with a partner or small group.</li></ul> <b><u>See an example:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Put the example of student writing from the Describing my plans for the future up on the OHP. <b>DO NOT HAND IT OUT TO STUDENTS!</b> They will probably want copies, but if you hand it out, they will likely copy it.</li><li>• Read it out loud slowly. Give students another couple minutes to read it silently.</li><li>• Talk about it together, answer any questions, make sure students understand.</li></ul> <b><u>Write:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give out questions handout. Have students jot down some answers on the paper.</li><li>• Next have students use their answers to create a paragraph-style writing like the example they saw. Give them at least 30 minutes to write.</li><li>• As students write, circulate and offer help with vocabulary, spelling and word order.</li></ul> <p>Alternatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If you are short on time, don't have students write their answers on the handout, just use it as a guide to think about what to write in a paragraph.</li><li>• If you have a mix of writing levels in your class, you might have the lower level students write on the handout first, while the higher students can jump right in to writing a</li></ul>	

paragraph.

**Feedback:**

- As students finish, have them exchange with another student, read and help each other to make corrections or clarify.
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When a student finishes, take a few moments to read it over yourself, and give some basic feedback.

**Focus only on:**

- basic spelling
- clarification of ideas
- basic sentence structure, i.e. using capital letters and periods.

**DO NOT CORRECT EVERY MISTAKE!** This would be too overwhelming for your students.

## **Describing my plans for the future**

1. How long do you want to live in Minnesota?
2. How long do you want to study English?
3. Do you live in a house or apartment? Do you want to live there a long time or do you want to move?
4. Do you have a job? Do you want to stay at your job for a long time or do you want a new job?
5. Do you have children? If yes, do you want more children? If no, do you want children someday?
6. What other plans do you have for the future?
7. What do you need to do in the next two years?
8. What do you want to do in the next two years?

My name is Jose. I have many plans for the future. Right now I live in Minnesota, but I want to go back to my country in two years. I have a job in a restaurant. It is a good job. I want to work many hours at my job, save my money, and use my money to build my house in my country. When I go back to my country, I want to get married. Then I want to have children. I want to have three children, or maybe four. Now I need to study English a lot so I can get a raise at my work. I need to work hard. I want to find another job if I don't get enough hours at my job. I have many ideas about the future. But maybe the future will be different than my ideas!

Write answers to the questions.

1. How long do you want to live in Minnesota?
2. How long do you want to study English?
3. Do you live in a house or apartment? Do you want to live there a long time or do you want to move?
4. Do you have a job? Do you want to stay at your job for a long time or do you want a new job?
5. Do you have children? If yes, do you want more children? If no, do you want children someday?
6. What other plans do you have for the future?
7. What do you need to do in the next two years?
8. What do you want to do in the next two years?

Now, write your answers on another paper in a paragraph.