

Descriptive Writing

When writing a description, it should create a picture using words. Imagine what you are going to describe and give a clear, accurate picture in your words. Select appropriate words, using as many senses as you can as well as movement words:

sight - shape, texture, light, shade and colour			
touch	smell	sound	taste

Students could complete activity sheets on animal movements and sounds in preparation for this exercise.

1. Use descriptive sentences to set the scene. These sentences are usually longer than those for action and dialogue.
2. Where possible, use adjectives, adverbs, similes, metaphors and personification.
3. Write a paragraph about chicks, hens or other farm animals after the following discussion.

What Animal Am I?

Before the students start their writing, they could listen to some of the descriptions below that were written by 11 year olds to see if they can identify the animals.

The King of Beasts

One crisp, early morning in the jungle, the king of beasts awoke. After stretching lazily, the big cat prowled through the trees. As he passed under a tree full of monkeys, he roared and roared. The monkeys went screaming up the branches. The powerful beast went looking for something to become his breakfast. He spied a goat that he knew would be easy prey. The bleating goat was soon crushed under the weight of one of the largest members of the cat family.

The Seabird

The broad-winged bird was scavenging. Her pearl grey plumage was thick, soft and fluffy. Her tiny face was cheeky. She swooped down head first into the deep, angry ocean, bringing her prey up to the surface and then soared high into the sky towards her home to feed her young.

The Rodent

There she was again, the rodent I had spied yesterday. She had a honey brown coat, with an itchy pink nose at one end of her tiny body and a long, spindly tail at the other. She sniffed around cautiously before scurrying along a little more. She soon reached a half-eaten cake. She sat cautiously for a moment, and then set about the cake taking dainty, little nibbles. When she had finished, she cleaned her crumb-covered nose with her busy little hands.

Waiting

I had been watching her for days. She was the same plump, white ball of feathers sitting on a grassy island in the middle of a wide lake. She was just sitting there, as if she was made of stone. Then she stood up and waddled on her clumsy webbed feet to the water's edge. She ducked her delicate beak into the clear water, sending small, circular ripples away from her head.

The Giant Monster

The ponderous monster ambled through the thick, leafy jungle, awakening all the other creatures by making a loud, trumpeting noise. Its heavy body pounded along until it reached the stream and slowly filled its trunk. Then the beast splashed the water over its thick, grey skin.

The Busy Creature

This tiny creature busily darted from flower to flower, his black velvet body with yellow stripes shimmering in the sun. He perched on a rose and collected sweet nectar into a bag-like container swung over his shoulder. He looked like a housewife doing the family shopping.

The Beauty

There he stood, silhouetted by the bright moon. I looked at him and admired his unique beauty. Freedom was in his blood. His coat had a brilliant sheen and his mane and tail looked soft and free of knots. He had large, round eyes that were kind, with a hint of spirit. I noticed his ears were alert. He was poised and ready to escape any enemy. I would love to have been on his back, riding free and into the sun. He would be mine and we would ride as one. No – he was meant to roam free and he would let no-one ride him. I looked again, but he had disappeared. Perhaps he'd be back tomorrow night and I'd see him again. Oh well! Goodbye, my beauty.

The Egg-Laying Mammal

The water rippled as the brown, furry, egg-laying mammal swam towards her dirt-lined burrow. On the way she was stirring up mud on the bottom of the river trying to catch her dinner. She saw a prospective meal, a grey worm trying to wriggle its way between the rocks and dived for it. She caught the worm in her bill and set off towards her burrow in the bank.

The Crested Bird

Her snow-white feathers glistened and her yellow crown stood on end. Her screaming cry rang through the trees. She flew swiftly above them, flapping her wings only once to gain height. Soon she had settled on a dead log, alert to defend her babies if a creature suddenly lashed out at her, but nothing stirred. Soon she disappeared into the log, but the nestlings could still be heard above the wind.

The Largest Member of the Cat Family

The solitary animal was stalking its prey. It leapt towards the young deer. As its sharp teeth sank into its victim's skin, the weakened animal struggled to become free. Its prey finally gave up and the huge cat won and devoured its meal and went to rest by the water hole.

The Black-spotted Jungle Cat

The streamlined body stalked its prey in the long grass. The fastest land animal over short distances was aided by its long legs. It was in a perfect position to strike. Suddenly it shot out of the grass at the heels of its next dinner. Its aerodynamic shape and amazing agility was matched by the grace and beauty of the antelope. Quickly it closed the ever so small gap between the two animals. It sprang on its luckless victim, quickly severing its windpipe. Once again the cheetah proved its speed and strength over other animals.

The Bird of Prey

Floating in the air like a stray balloon, the bird of prey caught sight of its first meal. The merciless bird circled its victim, its streamlined body glistening in the sun and its sharp, razor-like claws waiting. Its dark brown plumage with its distinctive golden wash over the back of its head and neck, contrasted against the deep, blue sky. Its dark eyes were like black pearls, showing no fear. It circled again and moved in for the kill.

Cuddles

The little marsupial lived in a gum tree and resembled a teddy bear. Her thick, ash-grey fur was soft and she had round, furry ears and a big, black nose. She sat in the fork of the tree, munching away happily on leaves. Like all the females of her species, she was nocturnal and had grasped the branch firmly with her feet while she slept.