

Chapter 8

Description

In a description, the writer paints a word picture of a person, place, or object by appealing to one or more of the five senses (smell, taste, hearing, touch, and sight). Description is useful in many kinds of writing because it helps the reader see the people, places, or objects being described. Good description depends on the effective use of specific detail. Writing “There was a flower in a vase” doesn’t help the reader see the flower as clearly as writing “There was a long-stemmed red rose in a slender crystal vase.” The more specific you can be, the more you will help the reader see the scene you have in mind. Use concrete and specific nouns and verbs, descriptive adjectives and adverbs, and vivid images. (For additional help in choosing effective language, consult Chapter 23, “Word Choice”.)