

The Write Place

THE WAC WRITING CENTER AT LSC- MONTGOMERY



The Descriptive Essay

This type of essay relies heavily on vivid descriptive detail. Depending on the subject being described, this could include information about appearance, sound, feel, or even taste and smell. To use this organizational pattern effectively, it is helpful to focus on one overall impression that can be supported by sensory details.

Purpose: to entertain and/or inform readers using sensory details

Perspective: third-person (*he, she, it, one, they...*), second-person (*you*), first-person (*I, we*)

Organization: by location, in the order perceived, in order of importance

Typical Structure:

1. **Introduction:**
 - a. Attention-getter pointing to the subject being described
 - b. Purpose of this description
 - c. **Thesis:** overall impression to be created
2. **Body (each paragraph):**
 - a. **Topic sentence:** one specific aspect of the overall impression
 - b. Major sensory details
 - c. Supporting details
 - d. Transition to the next aspect
3. **Conclusion:**
 - a. Final comment on the subject
 - b. Overall significance of this description

Notes:

- Description is common in **expository** writing, such as journalistic reporting.
- A good description uses vivid language to paint a mental picture.
- Supporting details in the body of the essay may be grouped into individual paragraphs by time, space, or perception.
- **Similes** (comparisons using "like" or "as") and **metaphors** (figurative equations) are useful for giving the reader a quick mental image.
- **Strong verbs** (such as *hurry* and *blare*) are generally more vivid and interesting than the corresponding **adverbs** (such as *quickly* and *loudly*).

Sample Essay

Fore! Golf can be a very hard game. When learning the perfect golf swing, really only four components are needful. These basics, when practiced diligently, transform a duffer into a tiger. These four fundamentals encompass both motions and emotions.

Always keep your head down! This is what is heard in every golf lesson. Like maintaining focus, a steady and immovable head helps forge a stable and aligned body axis. It anchors the top, just like the feet the bottom.

A well-structured golf swing involves a straight left arm (for right handed players), the key in making sure the club stays in position to hit the ball squarely. The arms look like a triangle to start, with the right arm holding closer to the body as the swing rises. Halfway to the top, the wrists break, along with the triangle. An internal metronome will smooth out an unforced swing.

Turn, turn, turn. On the upswing, the body rotates in a barrel, with no lateral shift. The hands turn out on the upswing, and then turn in on the downswing to meet the ball. After contact with the ball, the whole body rises to face the target on the follow-through as the club comes up high. Again, all this succeeds with practice, and a good swing soon becomes second nature.

The fourth part involves the head (the inside of the head). Like every sport, a self-focus ruins athletic health. A good athlete focuses on the target, and a golfer needs a pre-shot routine to make this happen: step back, set the target, choose the near target, set the stance, and grip the club. Doing this relieves the mind of any concern over targeting, and results in a calm and natural swing.

A good sportsman masters the basics of the game. Practice brings good performance. With these four fundamentals, a golfer has a solid grip on good scores, as well as enjoyment.