

Sensing a Story

Using all five senses to write a story with loads of sensory detail.

Level: Intermediate

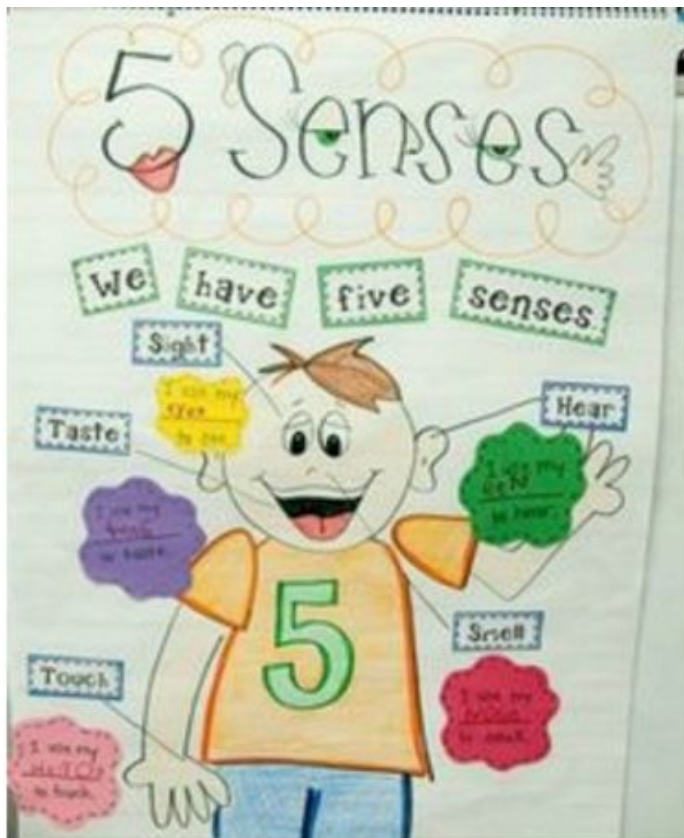
Time: 45 minutes

Materials: board, visual of senses (optional)

Objectives: Students will learn how to write descriptively

1. Presentation

Explain to your students that one important aspect of a good story is details. Describe the concept of imagery. Explain that writing descriptively is easier if you consider the senses one by one while writing. Teach your students about the five senses. Then ask students what types of details they could write about if considering the five senses. Solicit answers and write these on the board. If students need prompting, suggest things like: If I saw the character, what would he/she/it look like? If I talked to the character, what would he/she/it sound like? What does the character hear around him/her/it throughout the story? How does the setting smell? Throughout the story, what does the character touch or taste? Allot time to teach sentence structure when writing about the sentences: "It sounds like; it tastes like." You may also wish to introduce metaphors or similes using a worksheet similar to the one pictured below.



I AM as...*

- QUICK as
- SLOW as
- SMALL as
- LARGE as
- HAPPY as
- SAD as
- NICE as
- MEAN as
- COLD as
- HOT as
- WEAK as
- STRONG as
- LOUD as
- QUIET as
- TOUGH as
- GENTLE as
- BRAVE as
- SHY as
- TAME as
- WILD as
- LAZY as
- BUSY as

**Put it all together,
and you've got**

Activity based on a book "Quick as a Cheetah" by Audrey & Dan Wood
©2012 Smile Play Learn
<http://www.smileplaylearn.com>

2. Practice

You will offer an exercise to stimulate each of the five senses. After each exercise, allow time for the students to briefly write their impressions.

- Sight: Ask students to look around and write all the details of their surroundings, everything they see. Then ask students to close their eyes and imagine their favorite place on Earth. What do they see in their imagination? Take five minutes to write the description.
- Hear: Ask students to close their eyes and listen. (No talking obviously.) Let them listen for a full minute or two and then ask them what they hear. Tell your students it doesn't matter what the sound actually is, but what could it be? What does the sound remind them of? Take five minutes to write the description.
- Taste: Give each student a piece of candy or a piece of gum. Or ask students to recall what they had for dinner the night before, or breakfast. Take five minutes to write the description of the taste.
- Smell: Have students close their eyes. You and your counterpart walk around the room placing different spices or herbs below students' noses. Anything with a strong smell will work (soap, citrus fruits, perfume, etc.). Ask the students to write down what they think they smelled. Then take five minutes to write down what that smell reminds them of.
- Touch: Put an object in an opaque bag. Have students reach into the bag and feel around. If you want you can have multiple bags (one with cotton, one with rice, one with noodles). Take five minutes to write down a description of what they feel.

3. Produce

Ask the students to write a story for homework that includes descriptions of all five senses. You may wish to provide prompts to choose from.