

## **Understand Language Skills: DESCRIBING PERSONS, PLACES, OBJECTS AND EVENTS**

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## **DESCRIBING PERSONS, PLACES, OBJECTS AND EVENTS**

Writing is an art. It is one of the basic four skills of language learning. When mastery over other skills is achieved, then comes the place of writing. Learning to write means to excel in all other skills and then applying them jointly to express one's own ideas, views and creative thinking. Writing means to express something with accuracy and fluency.

The main objective of writing is to train the learner to express himself effectively in good English. This course of writing includes training them to write in both formal and informal ways. It may include all kinds of compositions, letter writing, creative writing, report writing, writing about different places and objects, describing or writing the histories of various persons, precise writing, summarizing and so on.

### **Describing Objects**

It is the form of writing used since long back. We keep describing different persons off and on without being even conscious of the fact. For example, simple composition like 'My Favorite Teacher', 'My Best Friend', 'My Self', etc. We describe different personalities using the third persons like she, he they etc. A few examples are given here under:

#### **Example No.1: 'The Postman'**

1. Name of the postman: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Area of distributing letters: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Location of the post office: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Nature of work: \_\_\_\_\_
5. What he does: \_\_\_\_\_

6. In the morning: \_\_\_\_\_
7. In the afternoon: \_\_\_\_\_
8. How his job is helpful to others: \_\_\_\_\_

Giving such a frame/outline of any essay each child will come up with different points and the writing will be creativity, their own ones differing from the others.

### **Example No. 2 ‘My Self’**

There seems no need to give an outline to this essay. The children may be asked to write whatever they know about themselves. Moreover, if the learner’s ability to think is very poor, he may be given points like:

1. What is your name, age sex etc.?
2. Where do you live?
3. Where do you study?
4. What is the name of your father and mother?
5. How many brothers/sisters do you have?
6. What do you like/

And soon the learner may be asked to write freely keeping these questions in mind.

### **Describing Places**

This sort of description is to strengthen the art of writing. Here the children can write about various places they have either visited or have read about or wish to visit. They can even describe the places which are of great importance and value in our day-to-day lives or the real life situations. It may include the topics like ‘Agra – The City of Taj’, ‘My School’, ‘Our Country’ etc.

### **Example No.1 ‘My School’**

The name of my school is Modern Islamia Higher Secondary School. It is situated in the heart of city Lal Chowk. It is the first school in our valley and has been best ever since then. We have many big buildings in the school, namely the Lower Primary Department, the Junior Department, the Senior Department and the Higher Secondary Department. There are almost 50 teachers in our school. Mr Samad, a kind hearted ..... and so on

We have many lawns, a volley ball court and a basketball field ..... so on.

This was an unguided essay and whatever a learner feels can put out in his writing. Similarly we can guide the learners on some points and develop the habit of ‘to the point writing’ by giving a brief outline as follows:

### **Example No. 2 ‘My Class Room’**

Write up a few sentences keeping in view the following points:

1. The location of room.
2. Area of room.

3. Number of doors and windows.
4. Chairs and desks.
5. Fans, bulbs etc.
6. Flooring / ceiling
7. Notice board, displays, charts etc.

### **DESCRIBING OBJECTS**

Here different objects can be described differently like simple description of things or giving an auto biographical touch to things.

For example, describing My Watch, A Coin, My Story Book, The Blackboard etc.

#### **Example 1 ‘My Watch’**

- Silver watch, in jeweler’s shop
- Other watches there - the simple ones.
- Your father asked for the silver watch lying in the counter.
- Your liking - given to you as a birthday present.
- Importance of the watch.
- Your love for the watch.

Proceeding this way, a beautiful creative piece of writing can be framed out.

#### **Example 2 ‘The Autobiography of a Rupee’**

- Rupee coin - how it was formed - its history
- Used in earlier days and even now for what.
- How it is useful to man.
- What if there is no rupee and so on.

### **Describing Events**

We witness events. Pleasant or unpleasant ones. For example, A House on Fire, My Birthday, Our Annual Day in School, A Bus Accident and so on.

There are many more events that can be described by children. Of course, the teacher has to keep in mind the mental age and class of the children while assigning them some topic/event to write about it.

#### **Example 1 ‘A Motor Car Accident’**

These days a craze for speed is mainly responsible for many accidents and innocent people lose their lives for nothing. I witnessed one such accident while I was with my parents on the Srinagar – Baramulla road. We were having some ice cream when two guys were coming fast on motor bike. The rider had put on an earphone into his ears and was riding so fast that he passed with a

splashing sound. Within a fraction of second, there was a big bang and we looked back. The boys had bumped into a motor car. The boys got severer injuries. The passengers in the car, the driver, his wife and their small kid all were badly injured. I don't know what happened to the guys afterward but I know one thing "Speed thrills but kills".

## **Summarizing and Elaborating**

### **Summarizing (Precise Writing)**

A precise means a summary and precise writing therefore means summarizing. It means the gist or main theme of a passage expressed in as few words as possible. It is usually said to summarize means to reduce the actual passage to its one-third size. The precise always has to be shorter and brief than the actual passage but conveying the main idea, content or theme of a passage.

Precise writing or summarizing is very helpful exercise in 'the writing skill' as it teaches to express one's thoughts and ideas very clearly, concisely and effectively which is of great value in practical life.

### **Procedure to be Followed in Summarizing.**

1. Read carefully the passage given, if necessary, three or four times to understand clearly its main theme.
2. Examine the passage in detail, to make sure of the meaning of each sentence, phrase and word.
3. Give a short title to the passage.
4. Note down or underline main and most important points contained in the passage.
5. Draft out the gist of the passage upon these noted underlined important points.
6. Revise the draft 2 – 3 times and check the number of words of the original passage and then the precise written by you. it should come out about one third of the original.
7. Write in simple direct language without making mistakes and the precise is ready.

### **Example 1.**

#### **Original passage.**

Things which may be very good when only done from time to time, tend to become very harmful when done too often and too much. This applies even to such good things as work or rest. Some people form a bad habit of working too much and others of idling too much. The wise man always remembers that this is true about himself and checks any bad habit. He says to himself, "I am now becoming idle" or "I like too many sweets" or "I smoke too much" or "I have fallen into the trap of tobacco" and then adds "I will get myself out of this bad habit at once".

#### **Precise – "Quieting Bad Habits"**

It is very easy to acquire bad habits. Such as eating too many sweets, or smoking. The more we do anything the more we tend to do it. It is better to quit bad habits at once.

### **Example 2**

#### **Original passage.**

I have come across many children who have confidence enough to talk politely to the unexpected guest till the arrival of the parent. I am not talking about the content of the conversation, but the fact that the child capable of sitting politely and making the guest feel comfortable. A request for a glass of water is reciprocated and an offering that is neat and tidy.

#### **Precise – “Confident Children”**

There are many children well-mannered possessing good etiquette who can even entertain guests. They are simple confident enough.

#### **Elaborating/expansion of passage**

This sort of writing is the exact opposite of precise writing where we compress the things. Here we have to expand and elaborate. A short sentence or phrase is given which is to be elaborated or enlarged into a paragraph by adding details, illustrations, experiences or proofs to the given simple statement. This exercise basically aims at developing free hand writing. It stimulates our creative thinking which leads to the creative writing.

#### **Procedure to be followed in elaborating.**

There is as such no hard and fast rule for elaborating but keeping in mind a few things will prove useful.

1. Read the original sentence carefully till you get an idea of its meaning.
2. Having a clear meaning in mind, proceed to expand it by adding as much experience, details, illustration as you can.
3. The expansion should be relevant to the topic.
4. To check whether your script is all right. Forget the topic for a while and read the paragraph written by you. Then apply the given topic to it and see whether it really suits your passage.
5. Correct all the mistakes, loopholes etc. and give it a final shape.

#### **Example 1. “Lack of Respect” (Original topic)**

**Elaborated.** As a teacher, I have watched generations of students grow up. A few decades back, it was customary for students to stand respectfully at the entry and departure of the teacher. Today, I find that greeting a teacher has become the most difficult task. May it be that the young students have a good rapport with the teacher and have no inhibitions!

Once I heard some students saying that the teacher earns less than a clerk in my father’s office, so why should we stand up.

### **Role of Language Lab. in Acquisition of Language Skills**

Language laboratory is a place in the school/institution which provides additional facility to learn and practice different skills of English language using technology. Language lab helps in learning the standard pronunciation of language items such as vowels, consonants, speech, etc. In recent time, language lab has become a popular tool for personality development which is equipped with modern audio-visual recording device, ICT and other electronic media related instruments.

#### **Benefits of Language Laboratory**

- Language lab promotes enthusiasm and motivation among learners to learn new language
- Language lab helps in making an interactive environment
- It provides equal opportunity for learning to all
- It gives opportunity to listen to authentic and standard pronunciation
- It also helps in recording and listening to one's own voice which is very helpful in improving communication
- It limits the scope of miscommunication and transmission loss