

VIVID DESCRIPTION

In expressive and academic forms, writers often use description to enlighten an audience about the appearance of their characters, the physical attributes of the setting, and even the details of their actions/experiences. Because writers tend to elicit all of the modifiers that they can to explain the scene, we tend to call this Vivid Description.

ANECDOTE

When I read stories to my five year-old son before he goes to bed, I often use vivid description to make the story seem more interesting. Using just simple description, a typical story might sound like this:

Once upon a time, there was a maiden who lived in a castle, which was guarded by a dragon. She was scared, and she dreamed that someone would rescue her. A knight who lived in a nearby kingdom happened to be walking around the forest when he heard her cries from the castle. [Undeveloped]

Now, that's okay. But, it seems to lack some development. However, using Vivid Description, the story usually receives a stronger and more vivid sense of depth to it:

Once upon a time, there was a beautiful maiden who lived in a dark, eerie castle, which was guarded by a large evil dragon. Every night and every day, the maiden was very frightened. She dreamed that someone would rescue her and free her from the captivity of this horrible beast. A handsome, young knight from the nearby kingdom of Devonshire happened to be walking around in the adjacent forest when he heard her faint cries from the castle. [Developed]

In writing for other courses, it is important to be conscious of just how much description you place into your writing.

STRATEGY

A good way to attain some much needed description in your writing is to add useful modifiers (adjectives and adverbs). Additionally, it might be important to consider the sensory qualities of a particular component of the writing.

Sight/Appearance

Smell

Sound

Taste

Touch