

1a – MODES OF WRITING

Objectives

Know the **REFLECTIVE**, **DESCRIPTIVE**, and **NARRATIVE MODES**

Understand how each **MODE** is used

Be able to write in each **MODE**



TASK 1

Figure: The Hunt for Red Riding Hood

Identify the following 3 extracts as either **REFLECTIVE**, **DESCRIPTIVE**, or **NARRATIVE**:

When I see this image, it makes me think of calmness and peace. It makes me think of nature because of the beautiful features shown in this picture. What springs to my mind the most is the way colour and creation is shown.

At evening time, in the giant endless forest, there was a girl in a red velvet dress. She was doing her daily walk through the forest with the long grass reaching above her knees. She smelled something: the stench of rotten meat beside her. In absolute disgust she ran away from the smell of the meat.

The ferocious, feral wolf leapt aggressively, jaws open in a ravenous triangle, before snapping closed against the flesh of the maiden's shoulder. Its weight, combined with its sudden impact, immediately crushed the wind from her, pitching her forwards so that chocolate wisps blew up about her in a purposeless frenzy. While her heart boiled over with panic as the wolf's heavy, fang-laden panting – like a ticking clock counting down to her death – snapped closer, closer, closer.

KNOWING THE DIFFERENCE

The **REFLECTIVE MODE** is a summary of something, revealing your **THOUGHTS** and **FEELINGS** about it

- we **never** write **creatively** in this **MODE**
- it distances and bores the **READER** as it lacks excitement

The **DESCRIPTIVE MODE** brings a scene or picture to life

- is useful in helping the **READER** feel almost as if they are a part of that single moment in time

A **NARRATIVE** is a **STORY** about an **event**,

- has a **beginning**, **middle** and **end**
- Uses **DESCRIPTIONS** to bring the story world to life
- Only a **NARRATIVE** engages with:
CHARACTERS & their **ARCS**,
MORALS & TRUTHS ABOUT THE HUMAN CONDITION,
Shifts of time,
developments of **ACTION**

1b – MODES OF WRITING

... CONTINUED



TASK 2

In no fewer than 50 words for each task...

- Write about the picture (above) in the **REFLECTIVE MODE**:
“In the picture, I can see...”
- Now, write in the **DESCRIPTIVE MODE**:
“A gentle breeze did nothing to alleviate the oppressive summer heat...”
- Finally, write in the **NARRATIVE MODE**:
“Breaking from the line, two officers, like obedient drones, darted forward...”

REVIEW

Which of your pieces seems more alive and interesting?



TASK 3

In no fewer than 50 words for each task...

- Write about the picture (above) in the **REFLECTIVE MODE**:
“In the picture, I can see...”
- Now, write in the **DESCRIPTIVE MODE**:
“The figure in red sat perched before the clock face, like some crimson gargoyle...”
- Finally, write in the **NARRATIVE MODE**:
“Crouched down in infernal leathers, the Devil of Hell’s Kitchen peered out through the deluge, meditating on what he had learned...”

REVIEW

Which of your pieces seems more alive and interesting?

2a – SHIFTING FOCUS

Objectives

Know what **FOCUS** is

Understand how to **SHIFT FOCUS** to guide the reader

Be able to **SHIFT** the narrative's **FOCUS**



Figure: Focus shifts and zooms out

FOCUS

- **FOCUS** refers to what a writer is writing about in any given sentence
- **FOCUS** directs a reader's attention, telling us what is important about **CHARACTER**, **SETTING** and **PLOT**
- Cohesive paragraphs are linked by an **idea / subject** that connects sentences together
- In an effective description, **FOCUS** will **SHIFT** and **ZOOM IN** or **ZOOM OUT** – this helps guide the reader to create a natural flow that does not confuse or distract
- A **JUMP** in **FOCUS** is used sparingly as it can be jarring or confusing for the reader.

Fireflies sparkled against the gloom as the girl's bare feet whispered through the brush at the edge of the hushed woods. Jostled up from the buckets, **they** drifted and swayed with a lazy indifference. Unaware of the heavy panting night on **their** heels. Yet, none strayed too far from the girl's shallow breath so that their tiny pulsating auras blinked and flickered like so many small candle flames about her: pin-pricks in the deep, pervading black. Their collective bubble was but a fragile shell of light against the things she felt amassing beyond her sight: things bristling in the shadows.

The 1st 3 sentences of the above example seem to shift with the fireflies to give a sense of the setting. **FOCUS** is held and **sentences** linked through the **pronouns** 'they' and 'their'.

TASK 1

1. Identify the linking pronouns in sentences 4 and 5
2. How are the descriptions of the fireflies connected with the girl?
3. Who does this allow the next paragraph to focus on?

TASK 2

Alter the structure of the following sentences; join them together as a single paragraph to create a **SHIFTING FOCUS**:

1. The topless man's fingers twitched.
2. Blue-grey tendrils curled out from the cigarette.
3. Corrupted rings of smoke floated upwards.
4. The rings broke apart in the sombre light.
5. The men studied each other through the dissipating haze.

2b – SHIFTING FOCUS

... **CONTINUED**

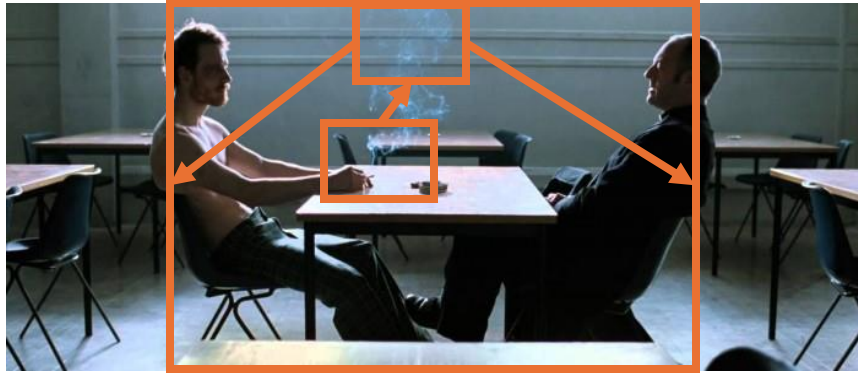


Figure: Developing a Scene

EXAMPLE FOCUS SHIFTS

Below, is an example of how to join the separate sentences together (from **TASK 2**).

The topless man's fingers twitched **and** blue-grey tendrils curled out from **his** cigarette, **which spiralled into** corrupted rings of smoke **that** floated upwards. The rings broke apart in the sombre light, **like the lost sentiment between** the **two** men **who yet** studied each other through the dissipating haze.

The smoke ascended and the silence fell.

Their eyes locked and some unspoken dialogue seemed to pass between them while they leaned back from each other, outwards from their table. As if, in this abandoned hall, they felt the need to fill the space; grant each other the liberty only distance would allow.

LANGUAGE PAPER 1 QUESTION 5

In the GCSE exam, you have 45 minutes to plan and write either a **descriptive piece** or the opening of a **narrative story**. That gives you enough time to write somewhere between **350** and **500 words**.

DEVELOPING YOUR DESCRIPTIVE PIECE

When writing a descriptive piece, the reader wants to imagine themselves there, experiencing the environment. This is achieved by:

- Imagining the reader is observing the scene – describe their experience
- Drawing the reader in – do not distance them by telling them a list of what you or they observe
“I/you can see... I/you can hear... I/you can smell...”
- Introducing the scene/setting with an overview description to help the reader answer the questions: **what – where – when**
- Guiding the reader by **SHIFTING FOCUS**, **ZOOMING IN** and **OUT**
- Developing the scene – revealing how things have changed/moved on since the reader started observing

TASK 3

1. Write an introductory paragraph that sets the scene, answering the questions: **what – where – when**
2. Write a paragraph at the end to develop the scene: can you give a sense about how the setting or the characters have changed?

3 – TONE, MOOD & ATMOSPHERE

Objectives

Know what TONE, MOOD and ATMOSPHERE are.

Understand how TONE and MOOD are created by LANGUAGE

Be able to use LANGUAGE to create ATMOSPHERE



“People may not remember what you did, or what you said, but they will always remember how you made them feel.”

TONE, MOOD & ATMOSPHERE

- **TONE** is the way a writer feels about what they are writing, whether *serious* and *sombre*, *light* and *comical*, *ominous* and *mysterious*, or *tense* and *expectant*.
- **MOOD** is what is felt by the reader as a result of the **TONE**, such as: *anxious*, *scared*, *humoured*, or *excited*.
- Both **TONE** and **MOOD** are created by the writer's use of **LANGUAGE** (such as **IMAGERY**)
- **ATMOSPHERE** is directly related to the use of **LANGUAGE** to describe **SETTING**, emerging as a result of the **TONE**.

TASK 1

1. Study the picture. Where might they be?
2. What might the **ATMOSPHERE** be like between the characters?
3. Make a list of the 5 *senses* (*sight*, *sound*, *smell*, *taste*, *textures*) and pick out ideas from the picture – in bullet points or as a mindmap

TASK 2

1. Which of your descriptive words seem to work together to create a specific **TONE**?
2. What is the **TONE** you want to work with?
3. Pick ½ descriptive word(s)/phrase(s) from each *sense*
4. Write a sentence of description for each *sense*, using at least 1 descriptive word/phrase from each *sense*.

REVIEW: Have you used effective descriptions (**ACOMPASS**)?

CHALLENGE: extend each sentence with a 2nd sentence

CONSIDER: If you were to experience this scene for yourself, how might that experience develop or change?

TASK 3

1. Pick 5 focus points from the picture
2. Describe these in a single paragraph, using your work from **TASK 2**.
3. Guide your reader through the description – connect them together
4. Improve your work from last lesson with today's tasks

REVIEW: What **ATMOSPHERE** do you think you've created? Does it match what you felt during **TASK 1**?

4 – THE GOTHIC GENRE

Objectives

Know what **GENRE** is

Understand the **TONE** of the **GOTHIC GENRE**

Be able to use **LANGUAGE** to create **ATMOSPHERE**



TASK 1

What might the **ATMOSPHERE** be in the scene (above)? How might you feel if you were there?

THE GOTHIC GENRE

- A **GENRE** is a **STYLE** of writing which affects the **TONE, MOOD,** and **ATMOSPHERE** of a *story*
- The **GOTHIC GENRE** has an easily recognisable **STYLE** where the **LANGUAGE** often creates a **TONE** of *dread* or a *mysterious, brooding, sinister,* or *spooky* **ATMOSPHERE**
- Environments are often *dark, bleak, decayed* and *isolated*
- **CHARACTERS** are usually *alone* and *wary* or *scared*
- The **SUPERNATURAL** and the *unexplained* are significant features or are suggested

TASK 2

1. Study the picture. Where might he be?
2. What might the **ATMOSPHERE** be like?
3. Make a list of the 5 *senses* (*sight, sound, smell, taste, textures*) and pick out ideas from the picture – in bullet points or as a mindmap

TASK 2

1. Which of your descriptive words seem to work together to create a *brooding, sinister* or *spooky* **TONE**?
2. Pick 1 or 2 descriptive word(s)/phrase(s) from each *sense*
3. Write a sentence of description for each *sense*, using at least 1 descriptive word/phrase from each *sense*.

REVIEW: Have you used effective descriptions?

CHALLENGE: extend each sentence with a 2nd sentence

CONSIDER: If you were to experience this scene for yourself, how might that experience develop or change?

TASK 3

1. Pick 5 focus points from the picture
2. Describe these in a single paragraph, using your work from **TASK 2**.
3. Guide your reader through the description – connect them together

REVIEW: What **ATMOSPHERE** do you think you've created? Does it match what you felt during **TASK 1**?

5a – PRECISE LANGUAGE

Objectives

Know what **LANGUAGE** is

Understand why certain **LANGUAGE** is more effective

Be able to affect the **READER** through **LANGUAGE**



Figure: Alone in the Dark

LANGUAGE

- **LANGUAGE** is the choice of **WORDS** used to convey a **message** – every **WORD** conveys specific **information**
- A writer chooses their **LANGUAGE** carefully so that both their **message** and their **TONE** (how they feel about what they're writing) is clear

TASK 1

Which is the more effective sentence, and why?

There were some noises coming from the trees.

Everything fell to silence, except for the hooting of a night owl, and her own padding footsteps upon the uneven path.

The 2nd example lends the writing specific detail to draw the reader in, doesn't it? It feels more alive!

TASK 2

In the example (below), what does each **adjective** and **adverb** add to the **MOOD**? Infer what it suggests to you:

Everything fell **suddenly** to an **eerie** silence, except for the **distant**, **staccato** hooting of a night owl, and her own **padding** footsteps treading **softly** upon the **uneven** path.

TASK 3

Given the following sentence:

Fireflies **were** in the air as the girl **walked** through the woods.

How do each of the following sentences affect the meaning? Focus on the **verb** and **adjective** changes

1. Fireflies **radiated** into the night air as the girl **wandered** through the **misty** woods.
2. Fireflies **disturbed** the **gloomy** air as the girl **crept** through the **haunted** woods.
3. Fireflies **sparkled** in the **darkened** air as the girl's **bare** feet **whispered** through the brush at the edge of the **hushed** woods.

Which of the above examples is the most **GOTHIC** and why?

TASK 4

Read the extract on the next page and consider its use of language:

5b – PRECISE LANGUAGE

... CONTINUED

Fireflies **sparkled** against the **gloom** as the girl's bare feet whispered through the brush at the edge of the hushed woods. Jostled up from the buckets, they drifted and swayed with a lazy indifference. Unaware of the **heavy panting night** on their heels. Yet, none strayed too far from the girl's shallow breath so that their **tiny pulsating auras blinked** and **flickered** like so many **small candle flames** about her: **pin-pricks** in the **deep, pervading black**. Their collective bubble was but a **fragile shell of light** against the things she felt amassing **beyond her sight**: things bristling in the **shadows**.

How does the avoidance of the use of the **adjective** “dark” and only one use of “light” make the writing more vivid? Consider:

Fireflies **lit** the **dark** as the girl's bare feet whispered through the brush at the edge of the hushed woods. Jostled up from the buckets, they drifted and swayed with a lazy indifference. Unaware of the **dark** on their heels. Yet, none strayed too far from the girl's shallow breath so that their **light** was **bright** in the **dark**. Their collective bubble was but a **fragile shell of light** against the things she felt amassing in the **dark**.

The second is still interesting as far as it continues to develop the **CHARACTERS** and their **situation**, but the repetitive limitations of the **LANGUAGE** make it a **monotonous** read

TASK 5

In each of the sentence pairs (right), which of the **SIMILES** and **METAPHORS** do or do not fit the **MOOD** suggested by the picture. Give your reasons:

A1) **Razor-sharp light darted** all around her, **zipping up** from the buckets like so many rockets.

A2) **Effervescent in the gloom**, the fireflies were all that lit her way.

B1) The girl paused upon the path and scowled menacingly into the darkness **like a predator in search of its prey**.

B2) The buckets were slowing her down now with **the weight of her own fears** as she paused at the forest's grim edge.

C1) Suddenly, the girl with **the bustling buckets of innocence** hesitated at twilight's turn.

C2) And, suddenly, with a spin and a shimmy, the girl lowered her two buckets and **stopped flying along the woodland path**.

D1) She fixed her eyes upon the path with stoic determination even as **her features shrank and hardened with apprehension**.

D2) She fixed her eyes upon the path **like a bed-ridden child in fear of a monster lurking underneath them**.

TASK 6

Using the examples, below, identify: i) the effect, ii) keywords and word classes, and iii) the **devices**:

1. Trees. The cackle of their branches about her ears, their spiny fingers picking at her smock as she passes: they lean down around her and kick out their roots to trip her from the path.
2. The hungry darkness, every watchful – expectant – croons bitterly for her body.

Create your own examples of **personification** and **pathetic fallacy** to create an **unsettling, sinister** and **scary MOOD**

6a – BUILDING SUSPENSE

Objectives

Know what **SUSPENSE** is

Understand how **LANGUAGE** creates **SUSPENSE**

Be able to create **SUSPENSE** through your writing



SUSPENSE

Figure: The Gorgons of Myth

- **SUSPENSE** is the feeling of excitement or anxious uncertainty created when we anticipate something is about to happen
- In fiction, **SUSPENSE** is created through **DESCRIPTION** which suspends the **ACTION** that the reader is anticipating

TASK 1

Which is the more effective sentence, and why?

She stared with yellow eyes. Her hair was made of snakes.

Ominously, her eyes were lit with a pulsating golden fire that radiated a thin throbbing halo of light. While, in a writhing mass upon her head, a mane of boiling, seething serpentine horror lashed out, spitting furiously.

Looking at the picture (left), you are immediately anticipating the attack – *the hack and slash of swords and snakes that you worry might overwhelm the hero* – the writer’s use of **DESCRIPTION** in the 2nd example enhances that anticipation

TASK 2

1. Identify a character (from the picture) and write 2 simple sentences describing them.
2. Rewrite using one coordinating conjunction to turn the sentences into a compound sentence

He is always angry. He is never happy at anybody.

He is always angry **and** is never happy at anybody.

TASK 3

Play around with the following sentences,

i) changing them from **SIMPLE** to **COMPOUND** to **COMPLEX** sentences,
ii) combining them, and

iii) improving the **DESCRIPTIONS** to create more **SUSPENSE**:

- Medusa emerged from the dark
- Her hair was made of snakes
- She stared with yellow eyes
- She held a sword
- She scratched the walls with her nails
- He screamed
- The beast chopped his head off

6b – BUILDING SUSPENSE

POSSIBLE IDEAS

Simple. Compound. Multi-clause.

- Medusa has hair made of snakes **and** she stares with yellow eyes.
- Medusa, **staring with piercing yellow eyes**, has hair forged from snakes.
- **Staring with piercing yellow eyes**, Medusa shakes her mane of writhing serpents.
- He screamed with all of his might **as the beast cleaved his head from his shoulders**.
- He screamed, **while the beast sawed at his neck**, and gasped his last – blood-bubbling – breath.
- His guttural scream, **which was all they could hear**, resonated like a thousand dying creatures.
- **Medusa emerged from the gloom**. Her talons screeched against stone and the **piercing yellow** of her eyes preceded her. **They were not alone after all**. **Ominously**, her eyes were lit with a pulsating golden fire that radiated a thin throbbing halo of light.

TASK 4

In the example (below), what does each **adjective** and **adverb** add to the **MOOD**? Infer what it suggests to you:

Ominously, her eyes were lit with a **pulsating golden** fire that radiated a **thin throbbing** halo of light. While, in a **writhing** mass upon her head, a mane of **boiling, seething serpentine** horror lashed out, spitting **furiously**.

ACTION is still happening through these **DESCRIPTIONS** – **DESCRIPTION** does not occur in isolation!

TASK 5

In each of the sentences (below), how do the highlighted **verbs** and **adjectives** affect the meaning and the **MOOD** suggested by the picture. Give your reasons

1. With helm **pulled down** to **cover** his eyes, the soldier **waved** his blades warily.
2. With helm **heaved low** to **shelter** his eyes, the soldier warily **sliced** the air with his blades.
3. With a **loud** shriek, the aura of light **pulled** her into the air.
4. With a **piercing** shriek, the aura of light **levitated** her into the air.
5. In one hand her blade **ignited** into a **blistering, incandescent** orange; in the other, she **curled** a **malevolent** fist of **fatal barbed** talons.
6. In one hand her blade **bloomed** into a **blushing, luminous** fire; in the other, she **furled** a **twisted** fist of **poisonous spikey** thorns.

TASK 6

Using the examples, below, identify: i) the effect, ii) keywords and word classes, and iii) the **devices**:

1. The stone tomb: its dank, heavy air lay low about the sad columns and depressed fallen slabs.
2. The hungry darkness, every watchful – expectant – croons and shuffles threateningly.

Create your own examples of **personification** and **pathetic fallacy** to create an **unsettling, sinister** and **scary MOOD**

6c – BUILDING SUSPENSE

EXTRACT

In a sudden rush they appeared, crawling and clambering and suddenly darting out from their hiding places. Scattered but converging upon him so that he was certain he was trapped. There could be no escape. And from their ranks, she materialised, seemingly blossoming from out of the riven and ruptured ruins of this stone temple.

With an uneasy, shuddering breath he heaved his helm low to shelter his eyes from her gaze, and warily sliced at the air with his blades; warning them all to keep their distance.

But they came on.

And, she became their vanguard, levitated upon an aura of light so that she towered over him with a piercing shriek of doom. In one hand her blade bloomed into a blushing, luminous fire; in the other, she furled a twisted claw of poisonous spiked thorns. Ominously, her eyes were lit with a pulsating golden fire that radiated out upon that thin throbbing halo of light. While, in a writhing mass upon her head, a mane of boiling, seething serpentine horror lashed out, spitting furiously. A hundred snakes, a hundred tongues, all tasting the air, scenting him, his sweat, his flesh. Hungry with desire.

TASK 7

Using the extract (left) **DESCRIBE** the fight using precise language and different sentence types to create excitement. Use the following order of events to guide your **NARRATIVE**:

1. Medusa lunges forward
2. The hero parries the blow and sidesteps left
3. He is keen to keep his eyes from her eyes – they will turn him to stone
4. An undead minion is sprinting at him
5. He continues to move left, spinning now to slice off its head
6. He catches a glimpse of Medusa turning in the reflection of his blade
7. A quick look about him and five more undead are closing
8. He engages them first: parries a head shot with both swords, kicks the 1st off balance, ducks a 2nd blow, drives one sword up through the 2nd's chin, yanks the blade free in time to block a gut stab
9. All the while, he feels Medusa's presence – now she lunges again
10. Her brazen blade carves one of his swords in two
11. He has time to dart backwards, throw a 4th undead figure in between him and Medusa...

SUCCESS CRITERIA

SHIFTING FOCUS which guides the reader's attention

ACOMPASS devices

ISPACED sentences