

Produce Creative Writing AS 1.4

Now and Then

Achievement Standard 90052 v4

Produce creative writing

Credits: 3

Student Instructions Sheet

In this activity you will develop a piece of descriptive writing where you take a scene you know well and show how it changes, or your perception of it changes, over time. You could also focus your description on one time frame or aspect only. Your readers are other students and your teacher. You will write at least 300 words.

Before you begin writing, you will look at samples of writing to look at techniques you could use to develop this description effectively.

| Achievement | Achievement with Merit | Achievement with Excellence |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Develop and structure ideas in creative writing.● Use language features appropriate to audience and purpose in creative | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Develop and structure ideas convincingly in creative writing.● Use language features appropriate to audience | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Develop and structure ideas effectively in creative writing.● Use language features appropriate to audience and purpose with control to |

| | | |
|----------|--|---|
| writing. | and purpose <u>with control</u> in creative writing. | <u>command attention</u> in creative writing. |
|----------|--|---|

You will need to make sure that the writing you submit for assessment:

- is at least 300 words long
- develops and structures ideas
- uses language features that are appropriate to your audience and purpose
- has been checked for errors such as spelling and punctuation.

Writing has four stages:

- Pre-writing, drafting, revising, publishing.

Pre-writing: Brainstorm use a central cloud graphic organiser, ideas, vocabulary choices (adjectives, synonyms, and verb choices). Scene (time and place) and sense of purpose in writing story plot (how this changed people, why it mattered?)

Drafting: getting your best words down on paper/best ideas . . .

Revising: Structure your work, elaborate, look at sentences, strong verbs, specific nouns, ends of sentences to the beginning...PUNCTUATION for impact!

Publishing: Your best version will be handwritten to the highest standard as you are submitting it for marking, and moderation through the English Department.

Task 1: Think of a scene.

You are going to write about a scene you know well. In your writing you could show how the scene changes or has changed. Here are some possibilities:

- **your favourite childhood playground - as it was then and as it seems now**
- **a favourite holiday spot - in the morning and in the evening, or summer and winter**
- **the stand at a sports ground during the game and after the match**
- **your school grounds – during the week, in the weekend or summer and in winter.**
- **a place you liked to visit - in the past and now**

a) Brainstorm some possibilities and choose a scene which you can describe vividly and possibly develop a contrast.

Task 2: Draw up a comparison chart

Use the chart which follows to help you remember the key details of the scene you will describe. The two columns are to show the two different time frames you are describing, e.g. past and present; summer and winter; morning and evening etc. Try and show how the scene changes in the second column.

| Time frame 1: | Time frame 2: |
|---|---------------|
| scenery | |
| colours /smells/ tastes/textures/sounds | |
| what is happening | |
| a person or creature present in the scene | |
| other details | |

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

Icons of the scene

Task 3: Writing is about choosing

Using the planning you have done, use these spaces to make vocab choices and imagery

Key idea: My scene – now and then

Some of the Five senses responses I have when I think about my scene are:

Sight

Sound

Taste

Smell

Touch/Feel

Best “five senses” ideas to include are

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

The mood or tone that I want to create is

Why this is one image/metaphor worth creating for my readers?

Best idea to write about is

Ten good adjectives linked with my idea

Best Adjectives are

Best **verbs** to describe sensations linked to the scene

In class tomorrow: finishing the draft, and then moving to revising the work.

Task 4: Learn a few tips from an expert

- a) Read the following extracts from Katherine Mansfield's famous short story 'At the Bay'. It may give you some tips on how you can turn your notes into a description. It describes a New Zealand seaside village at the beginning of the twentieth century.

These first paragraphs come from the opening of the story. They describe the morning:

Very early morning. The sun was not yet risen, and the whole of Crescent Bay was hidden under a white sea-mist. The big bush-covered hills at the back were smothered. You could not see where they ended and the paddocks and bungalows began.... A heavy dew had fallen. The grass was blue. Big drops hung on the bushes and just did not fall; the silvery fluffy toi toi was limp on its long stalks and all the marigolds in the bungalow gardens were bowed to the earth with wetness....

Round the corner of Crescent Bay, between the piled up masses of broken rock, a flock of sheep came pattering. They were huddled together, a small tossing, woolly mass, and their thin, stick-like legs trotted along quickly as if the cold and the quiet had frightened them. Behind them, an old sheep dog, his soaking paws covered with sand, ran along with his nose to the ground.

This next extract is the last paragraph in the story. It describes the same scene in the evening:

A cloud, small, serene, floated across the moon. In that moment of darkness the sea sounded deep, troubled. Then the cloud sailed away, and the sound of the sea was a vague murmur, as though it waked out of a dark dream. All was still.

- b) Mansfield has taken a scene she knows well and used it to frame her story, showing how the mood changes between morning and night.

Here are some of the techniques she uses to make her writing more effective. Find and underline the examples in the extracts.

- specific nouns to describe places (eg *Crescent Bay*), the scenery (*marigolds, toi toi*)
- fresh and interesting vocabulary (eg *drenched* rather than *wet*, *pattering* rather than *walking*)
- very detailed description to enable us to see the picture (eg the dog running *with*

- his nose to the ground*)
- short sentences to open and close her description - to leave a strong impression (*All was still*)
 - sets the scene and then introduces 'characters' (the sheep)

Task 5: Structure your ideas

In Mansfield's description contrast is not developed, but you may decide to do this in your piece of writing. If you decide to develop a contrast you will need to think of ways you can link your two time frames, so that the connection is shown between the two. Create a connection between the first sentence of your first paragraph and the first sentence of the paragraph that introduces the new time frame. Here are some possible words you can use to do this:

- 'Once' and 'Now'
- 'Although ..'
- 'When I returned ...'
- 'However'

Check the student exemplars below for other possibilities.

Task 6: Draft a story

- a) The student exemplar H *Summer Moods, Winter Moods* shows you how one student developed her writing, using the techniques from the Mansfield short story. Read this exemplar and also the other exemplars A to G. Discuss what aspects of the student writing in these exemplars are successful and what aspects could be developed further.
- b) Use your 'bare bones' chart from task 2 and the techniques you observed in the Mansfield description in task 3 to draft a description of your own. Write at least 300 words. You may not include material from any of the exemplars.

Task 7: Craft your writing

- a) Read over your writing and then use the techniques mentioned in task 4 as a checklist to edit it.
 - What can you add to make your story more detailed and visual?
 - Have you highlighted the contrast? You can also focus on one time frame or aspect of the scene without highlighting a contrast.
 - Have you used strong topic sentences and effective links for each paragraph?
 - Have you used appropriate and interesting language?
 - Have you included specific detail?
- b) Check all spelling. Use paragraphs and clear punctuation. Your work **must** be

accurate.

- c) Present your description in published form. If you wish you can give your description a title.

EXEMPLAR B: Not Achieved

The Swimming Pool

Deeper features:

Achievement criteria

- ideas
- style
- structure

Ideas evident, but lacks detail. Ideas are not sufficiently developed.

Friday nights at the Kilbirnie pool are disgusting. It's hot and stuffy in the pool café or sitting on the pool side. The pool is a heaving and thriving mass of water and swimmers. As if the main pool is not small enough it's divided into two halves. One half is used for primary school flipperball games and the other half is a play area. You're not allowed to dive in the diving pool because there's club water polo training going on there. In the small pool there's always a good game of rugby or bullrush going on. Anyone can join in if they want.

Some crafting is evident [care with vocabulary selection and syntax].

On Wednesday morning at 6 am it's the total opposite. There's not a ripple on the still shining water. It's freezing inside walking along the pool side then you feel the drafts whirling and hissing around the pool. Then you look around. There's no one there. 'Yes!' you yell because you've got the whole pool to yourself. You can still hear the echo 'yes' around the pool.

Some evidence of structural choices, but this adds little to the story.

Then you dive in. It's so cold at first it feels like you've got hypothermia but it's extremely refreshing. You slice through the water and watch the ripples you make.

EXEMPLAR F: Achieved

The Cook Strait Ferry

Crossing the Cook Strait by ferry, on a rough day is an unforgettable experience. The loud howling of the dreaded southerly wind drowns out any sounds of the ferry's humming engines starting up. The sharp jerk of the boat, as it leaves its safe docking behind, gives you the sign that you are underway on your journey.

Deeper features:

Achievement criteria assessing:

- ideas
- style
- structure

Some confusing or inappropriate vocabulary choices, eg "humongous / lush green hills / picturesque landscape."

The sky is dark and the monstrous, grey clouds above send the promise of rain. The vast expanse of water surrounding the lone ferry is a mirky greeny brown colour. The humongous waves stand up tall against the boat like mighty walls, as if they are trying to block the boat from finding a way through. When the boat breaks through them, in a last defence, the proud waves crash down upon the boat, sending fizzling sea spray everywhere.

All around, due to the boat's continuous lurching is the uneasing sight of people bending over, their faces hidden inside paper bags.

Writing includes more than one aspect of the main idea and links are made.

However, crossing Cook Strait on a calm day can be both pleasant and relaxing. You can hear the faint sound when the engine starts up below. The boat takes off smoothly into the calm water ahead. The sky is bright and the few scattered clouds above look anything but threatening. While travelling through Tory Channel or out from Wellington Harbour, the glistening water reflects a clear image of the lush green hills. Many people choose to sit outside on the deck, so they can take in the picturesque landscape.

Appropriately structured to show contrasts between crossings in different weather.

Once leaving the land behind, the atmosphere is still the same, peaceful and harmonious. People are doing whatever they enjoy, whether it be reading, talking, gazing at the eye-pleasing surroundings, or even in the welcoming bar, having a drink. On a calm day it is impossible to imagine Cook Strait any other way.

EXEMPLAR H: Merit

Deeper features:
Achievement criteria assessing:

- ideas
- style
- structure

Summer Moods, Winter Moods

Details of scene developed with an emphasis on colour and action. Links are made between colour and mood.

In summer our thin stretch of beach looks inviting. Smooth pebbles glisten under the water and translucent fish dart near the water's edge. Small boats bob in the water just off shore, with green weed clinging delicately to the mooring ropes. The boats have names like 'Pixie', 'Stand By Me' and 'She's Mine' and their white reflections quiver in the sparkling sea. Out beyond the boats, I can see a dark head and two pale arms churning through the water as a determined swimmer crosses the little bay from south to north. There is scarcely a ripple.

Structure is used deliberately to emphasise contrasting aspects from both summer and winter scenes. These are developed and linked.

Up on the beach the sand is carpeted with red threads from the pohutukawas which cast afternoon shadows over us. My little brother and his friend Sam paddle out on their boogie boards until they reach the nearest boat. They shinny up, swinging their wet legs over the slippery sides and then dive, whooping as they make flat stinging belly flops into the green water.

Word choices deliberate but not always effective.

Original imagery: eg "like a brown stain on the shore."

Excellent command of varied diction eg "...whooping as they make flat stinging belly flops into the green water."

When winter comes our little bay is not so appealing however. Great loops of brown seaweed gather along the water's edge like a brown stain on the shore. The water is murky. A few hardy boats still anchor off shore but they are tossed about by the rough waves. It makes me seasick to look at them. Their windows are dull, smeared with grime and seaspray. On the shore, the branches of the ancient pohutukawa bend in the wind, but no-one wants their shelter. Only one brave soul regularly takes the sea air. With her chin buried into her polar fleece, and one hand deep in her pockets, Mum walks our dog Tessa. She tosses a stick into the icy sea and the dog leaps in after it.

Only Tessa finds the water appealing, no matter what the

season.

EXEMPLAR: Excellence

And Then I Grew Up

Deeper features:
Achievement
criteria assessing:
● ideas
● style
● structure

I remember waking up in Grandma's guest bedroom. It always seemed to be winter when we were at the farm. I would peep over the huge pink satin eiderdown and study the frost on the window panes. It was like frosting on a wedding cake. My brother would be in the other bed he always had, the bed with the electric blanket and I had to cope with a hottie! Grandma kept the "green one" for me. We would study the icy glass and decide what pictures we could make of Mother Nature's hand. He seemed to see tractors and guns, while I only saw fairies and flowers!

Extensive and
specific details
that work
together to
create a vivid
image.

The button tin in the kitchen was almost sacred - a motley collection of buttons saved during two world wars. There were hundreds of them in an old tin which once contained tea leaves.

Writing
structured to
create specific
contrasts with
each individual
detail, building a
convincing
contrast.

On the back porch, dozens of boots lay scattered, camouflaged by gooey mud, and the smell of fresh cowpat seemed to be everywhere. When I finally left the warm haven of Grandma's kitchen to venture out into the icy beyond, I felt like a snowman. As I stood waiting with anticipation for Grandpa's ancient, mustard Land Rover to appear, I was filled with a great sense of excitement and exhilaration. The cobwebs on the fence line clothed in icy dew reminded me of lace. Grandpa told us they were fairies' lace, so we regarded them as untouchable. However, the thin ice covering each puddle was a temptation we couldn't resist. There was something wonderfully rewarding hearing the cracking of shattering ice as a muddy gumboot was thrust into each tiny frozen lake.

Syntax and
vocabulary is
varied and used
intentionally to
create effect
and achieve the
writer's
purpose.

My grandparents seem so little now - their backs are stooped, and their skin is shrivelled and sunken. Although I still sleep under the same pink eiderdown, it doesn't seem so huge anymore, nor is it so shiny. At last I, too, have an electric blanket, and so the green hottie hangs lonely and forgotten behind the bathroom door.

Now it's me leafing through the tatty Aunt Daisy recipe books, stained with the greasy thumbprints of three generations. It is me trying desperately to make the scones taste like Grandma's always have.

The tiny pine tree seedlings Grandpa and I planted in the house paddock now stand tall against the clear turquoise sky, and sheep rest in the long fingers of shade cast across the green grass. The breeze in their branches makes a soulful sound as childhood memories flood my mind.

The same decrepit Land Rover, complete with its white-on-black number plate,

still chugs into view. However, it is no longer excitement that I feel as I hear it approaching - instead, it is nostalgia.

The button tin still sits on the same shelf. Its lid is covered with dust as no little hands reach for it anymore. I tentatively take the tin and clutch it as if it was a fragile treasure. A simple selection of buttons, I realise, and yet a tin of special secrets. It must now await the next generation, so I place it gently back on its dusty shelf.