

Descriptive Verbs

Objectives

The student will identify strong verbs in text. The student will select strong, descriptive words to use in writing.

Skills

- identifying descriptive verbs
- recognizing the purpose of descriptive verbs
- creating a list of descriptive verbs
- replacing flat verbs with descriptive verbs

Materials

- chart paper
- marker
- “Sweden’s Igloo Inn” (page 76)
- old magazines (Check to be sure they are appropriate for students.)
- scissors
- glue
- construction paper
- student copies of “Using Descriptive Verbs” (page 77)
- student copies of “Strong Verbs” (page 78)
- student copies of “Using Strong Verbs” (page 79)
- “Student Writing Sample: My Blue Friend” for teacher reference (page 80)

Procedure

1. Explain to the students that when writing descriptively, we tend to focus on the use of adjectives, but verbs can be descriptive, too.
2. Write the sentences below on chart paper.
 - The animals ran in the forest.
 - The animals frolicked in the forest.
3. Point out to the students that the verb *ran* is acceptable to use, but the word *frolicked* is much more descriptive. It tells us that the animals were moving briskly and playfully through the forest.
4. Write the following list of verbs on chart paper and have the students brainstorm descriptive verbs that can replace them. (Suggested verbs are in parentheses.)
 - talk (*whisper, chat, mutter*)
 - yell (*shriek, scream, bellow*)
 - jump (*leap, hop, bound*)
 - eat (*gobble, nibble, taste*)
 - see (*peer, spy, witness*)
 - close (*latch, block, bolt*)
 - laugh (*giggle, snicker, chuckle*)

Descriptive Verbs *(cont.)*

5. Read aloud the article, “Sweden’s Igloo Inn” on page 76.
6. As you read, have the students raise their hands when they hear descriptive verbs. Write these verbs on chart paper. Ask the following questions:
 - How do these verbs add to the story?
 - Were you able to create visual images of the story?
 - Which descriptive words were particularly memorable?
7. Explain that the author uses these verbs to give the reader a clearer visual image of what is happening in the story.
8. Next, distribute copies of magazines for the students. Instruct the students to look for advertisements with descriptive verbs.
9. As they find the verbs, the students cut them out and glue them onto construction paper. Have the students store the pages in their writing portfolios for future reference.
10. Distribute student copies of “Using Descriptive Verbs” on page 77. The students should complete the page by writing a series of descriptive verbs for each verb listed.
11. Ask each student to select a previously written story from his or her writing portfolio.
12. Instruct the student to underline all of the verbs used. The student should then replace each verb with a more descriptive verb.

Publication

1. Have the students recopy their stories with the newly added descriptive verbs. Instruct partners to revise and edit their work.
2. Invite students to read their first and second versions of their stories. Encourage classmates to respond to the changes made and the use of descriptive verbs.
3. Display student work on a board entitled, “Vivid Verbs.”

Extension

1. Show the students how to find new verbs by using the thesaurus feature of a word-processing program. To use the feature in Microsoft Word, the student types a verb and then highlights it. Then the student clicks on *Tools* in the menu bar at the top of the screen and selects *Language . . . Thesaurus* from the drop-down menu. A window will appear, listing different word choices. The student can select a word from the window to replace the word that was originally highlighted.
2. Instruct students to read two or three articles from magazines or newspapers. The students will create a list of descriptive verbs found in the articles.
3. For added practice with using strong verbs, have the students complete “Strong Verbs” on page 78 and “Using Strong Verbs” on page 79.

Sweden's Igloo Inn

Sometimes on a very chilly night, the cold creeps in. It creeps beneath the thickest blankets, through the warmest pajamas, inside the coziest socks, until . . . Brrrr! It finds a set of toes to nip.

At the Ice Hotel in Jukkasjaervi (You-kus-yair-vee), Sweden, the cold doesn't have to sneak in. Guests who spend the night at the hotel expect the cold to nip at their toes. And their fingers. And their noses. That's because the entire hotel, from the floor to the ceiling to the walls and some of the furniture, is made of ice and snow!

Why would anyone spend money to stay in a snow fort? Kerstin Nilsson, a manager at the hotel, says its natural beauty attracts many guests. "It is pure winter: white and fresh snow, cold, beautiful northern lights in the sky and absolute quiet," she says. Guests who survive the 20 degree temperatures receive a printed Ice Hotel Certificate to prove they have conquered the cold. Says Nilsson: "After they spend the night, in the morning they feel like Tarzan or He-Man because they slept in there."

For eight years, a shiny new Ice Hotel has been built from fresh ice and snow each winter. Last year about 4,000 people checked in for a night at the Ice Hotel. Included in the \$80 room charge are an extra warm snowsuit and a mummy-style sleeping bag. Guests need all the extra padding they can get: the hotel's 100 "beds" are actually ice blocks covered with reindeer skins! One hotel visitor, Kim Kovel of New York City, said she had started to have second thoughts about spending the night there. "It's freezing!" she said. "Apparently everybody makes out O.K. But after I saw the beds, I got a little worried."

By May, warmer temperatures will melt the hotel into a giant puddle. But it's not gone for good: builders will start chipping away at another Ice Hotel in October.

Using Descriptive Verbs

Write two or more descriptive verbs to replace each verb below.

1. shout _____

2. move _____

3. sleep _____

4. play _____

5. talk _____

6. work _____

7. make _____

8. drink _____

9. write _____

10. jump _____

Strong Verbs

Write a verb on each line. Use the words in the Word Bank to help you.

1. The squirrel _____ on the nut.
2. I wanted to surprise my mom, so I _____ into the room.
3. I got mad and _____ off.
4. When I _____ my dinner, my mom said to eat more slowly.
5. She _____ over her shoulder and saw the boy chasing her.
6. He _____ at the math problem for a long time.
7. My dad _____ back and forth because he was worried.
8. The girl _____ at the handsome movie star.
9. The hungry lion _____ his kill.
10. The people _____ slowly down the path.
11. The coach _____ at the players when they lost the game.
12. He _____ so no one heard him except his friend.
13. The girl _____, "I hurt my arm."
14. The lady _____, "I am so tired."

Word Bank

strolled	gobbled	whispered	tiptoed
nibbled	roared	glanced	paced
devoured	sighed	stared	stomped
cried	gazed		

Using Strong Verbs

Write a descriptive verb on each line. When you are finished, share your paragraph with a classmate.

The big, hungry lion _____ through the jungle. The hunter _____ up as close as he could get to the lion, as he _____ his snack of trail mix. He hid behind some bushes and _____ at the lion. His guide _____, "That is the biggest lion I have ever seen!" The lion sniffed the air and turned and _____ at the hunter and his guide hiding in the bushes. Suddenly the lion flopped down on the jungle floor and _____ the deer he had just killed. "Let's get out of here," _____ the hunter. "I don't like the way that guy eats!"

Answer Key *(cont.)*

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1. nibbled
2. tiptoed
3. stomped
4. gobbled
5. glanced
6. stared
7. paced
8. gazed
9. devoured
10. strolled
11. roared
12. whispered
13. cried
14. sighed

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1. sit down and rest
2. made me very sad
3. teasing/joking with me
4. watch
5. do not speak
6. rely on
7. raining heavily
8. completely still
9. voraciously (a great deal)
10. sick
11. behave in a silly way
12. a great deal of money

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1. The cat curled up on the cushion and cried.
2. One Saturday a silly snake slithered in the sand.
3. Two tiny turtles trotted to the town.
4. The winter wind whipped past the water.
5. The pitter patter poured down on the pavement.
6. The bear ate berries for a breakfast.

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Answers will vary according to the dictionary used.

Page 121

1. sleek
2. lunar
3. agency
4. astronauts
5. surface
6. guidelines
7. exploration
8. weight
9. antenna
10. eventually
11. astronomers
12. comets
13. citizens

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Main Ideas

1. So scientists are inventing ways of making spider silk without spiders.
2. Finding new planets is no easy job.
3. But today more archaeologists than ever are turning their attention to ancient Nubia, the world's first known black civilization.