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# Using Descriptive Words to Help Readers Visualise

KS2 ENGLISH

WRITING

DESCRIPTIVE LANGUAGE

Ages 9-12 ⌚ 3 min read

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## Why Description Matters

When you write, you want your reader to feel like they're right there with you. Instead of just telling them what something is, you want them to **see** it, **hear** it, **smell** it, and **feel** it. This is called **descriptive writing**, and it's one of the most powerful tools a writer can use.

Imagine someone says, 'The cat sat on the mat.' Now imagine someone says, 'The fluffy, orange tabby cat stretched lazily across the soft, woolly mat, purring contentedly.' Which one paints a better picture in your head?

Think of it like the difference between a pencil sketch and a detailed painting. Both show a cat, but the painting has colours, textures, and depth that make it come alive.

## Use the Five Senses

Great writers use all **five senses** to describe things. Don't just say what something looks like—describe how it sounds, feels, smells, and even tastes.

**Sight:** 'The sunset was a burning orange.' **Sound:** 'The leaves crunched under our feet.' **Touch:** 'The ice felt smooth and cold.' **Smell:** 'The bakery smelled of warm bread.' **Taste:** 'The apple was crisp and sweet.'

## Choose Powerful Words

Instead of using common words, pick **adjectives** that are more interesting and specific. Don't say 'big'—say **enormous**, **gigantic**, or **towering**. Don't say 'sad'—say **gloomy**, **miserable**, or **heartbroken**.

Think of it like upgrading from a basic crayon set to a full rainbow of colours. You have so many more options to choose from!

## Use Comparisons

**Similes** and **metaphors** help readers picture things by comparing them to something familiar. A **simile** uses 'like' or 'as': 'The clouds were like cotton wool floating across the sky.' A **metaphor** directly compares: 'The night sky was a blanket of stars.'

These comparisons help your reader understand exactly what you mean because they're connecting your description to something they already know.

## **Show, Don't Tell**

Instead of saying 'She was angry,' you could write: 'Her face turned red, her fists clenched, and she slammed the door.' This shows the reader how angry she is, rather than just telling them. It's more interesting and creates a stronger picture.

Remember: the best descriptive writing makes your reader feel like they're part of the story. Use your senses, choose powerful words, and paint a clear picture with your words!