

Writing and Grammar—Grade 8 Rubric for Descriptive Essay

	<i>Audience and Purpose</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Elaboration</i>	<i>Use of Language</i>
<u>Score 6</u>	Creates a memorable main impression, supported with effective use of many sensory details	Well organized, with strong transitions helping to link words and ideas	Vivid, sensory details support main idea; creative use of figurative language provides interesting comparisons	Varies sentence structures and makes good word choices; very few errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation
<u>Score 5</u>	Creates a strong main impression, supported with relevant sensory details	Clearly organized, although an occasional lapse may occur	Sensory details strongly support main idea; figurative language beginning to make interesting comparisons	Some sentence variety and good word choices; some errors in spelling, grammar or punctuation, but they do not interfere with reader understanding
<u>Score 4</u>	Creates a main impression, supported by sensory details	Is consistently organized, although perhaps simplistically	Sensory details support main idea; figurative language used to create comparisons	Sentence structures and word choices may be appropriate but are occasionally awkward; errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation may occur but do not interfere with reader understanding
<u>Score 3</u>	May create a main impression, but does not adequately support it with sensory details	May have organization in parts, but lacks organization in other parts	Details in support of main idea not consistently effective; attempts at figurative language not always successful or interesting	Inconsistent control of sentence structure, and incorrect word choices; errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation occasionally interfere with reader understanding
<u>Score 2</u>	Sensory details may be present, but do not add up to a clear main impression	Very disorganized, and not easy to follow	Limited use of sensory details in support of main idea; unsuccessful use of figurative language	Problematic sentence structure and frequent inaccuracies in word choice; errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation hinder reader understanding
<u>Score 1</u>	Contains details that are unfocused or do not work in support of a clear main impression	Lacks organization, and is confused and difficult to follow; may be too brief to assess organization	No sensory details used in support of main idea; no figurative language	Little or no control over sentences, and incorrect word choices may cause confusion; many errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation severely hinder reader understanding

Scoring Model for Descriptive Essay: Description of a Trip

Think of a memorable trip you have taken somewhere such as to the beach, a relative's home, a big city, or even to the supermarket. Write a description of the trip and the place you visited. Tell why the trip was memorable.

Score 6

The writer presents a well-organized descriptive essay that conveys a memorable main impression, supported with many vivid details.

Strong Points:

1. Conveys a memorable main impression
2. Effective use of many sensory details
3. Well organized with strong transitions
4. Varied sentence structure
5. Very few errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation

The Great Spring Break Trip

Seven o'clock on a Sunday morning my mom comes in to wake me up. Today my family will be driving to Cherry Grove for Spring Break. This wouldn't be any ordinary trip, because for the first time my mom is letting me bring a friend with me. She would be arriving around eight-thirty.

A honk of a horn and I know that Sam has finally arrived. I went out to the driveway to help her carry her bags in. I could tell she was as excited as I was. My dad helped us load up the car because we were having trouble fitting everything into the trunk. After my moms car was packed my brother and I helped my dad put the motor-cycle on the trailer with the bikes. We headed off at exactly eleven o'clock. It was pretty quiet the whole way because my brother was riding with my dad in the truck.

We arrived at the house around three o'clock, and the house was a dump. It looked like nothing in the picture. My mom got upset and went to the main office to complain, and to our luck they let us switch to a new house. We packed up all of our stuff once more and headed to the new house. We stepped right inside the door and the house was gorgeous.

Sam and I ran to pick out our room and started to decorate the second we put our stuff down. In our minds Sam and I wanted to go shopping for bathing suits, but we had to wait until the next day. We went and checked out the beach and it was glistening. We couldn't wait until we could jump right in.

When we woke up bright and early we took showers, got dressed, and ate breakfast. The one thing stopping us from going shopping was my mom, she wasn't ready yet. We soon were off.

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Score 5

The writer presents a descriptive essay that conveys a main impression, clearly organized and supported with adequate details.

Strong Points:

1. Conveys strong main impression
2. Sensory details support main idea
3. Clearly organized
4. Figurative language beginning to make interesting comparisons
5. Some sentence variety and good word choice

Problem Points:

1. Some grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors

The Beach Is the Best

"I love the beach!" That is just one of the things I say when I'm at the beach. A memorable trip I had was to Myrtle Beach for Spring Break with my mom, dad, brother Danny, and friend Ashley. I had lots of fun. It was memorable because we went miniature golfing, I got to see my baby cousin, and we went to an amusement park. I wonder, do other people have as much fun in myrtle beach as I do?

Miniature golfing was fun, even though we play it every year. Though I came second to last it was still fun watching everyone else. My dad and brother were having a competition of who would win. Daddy won of course, just like always! The place was called "Dragons of Doom" so there were lots of caves to go through and dragons hanging above the caves. It was really interesting. Miniature golf is what I like to call fun!

The amusement park had lots of cool rides and games. My favorite ride there was the log flume. Ashley and I must have gone on it at least three times. When we weren't on the rides we played games. My mother won a big teddy bear when she played the ring-toss. We were all tired at the end of the day, but every one had fun!

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Think of a memorable trip you have taken somewhere such as to the beach, a relative's home, a big city, or even to the supermarket. Write a description of the trip and the place you visited. Tell why the trip was memorable.

Score 4

The writer presents a descriptive essay that conveys a main impression supported with some details.

Strong Points:

1. Conveys a main impression
2. Consistently organized
3. Sensory details support main idea

Problem Points:

1. Some awkwardness in sentence structure
2. Some awkwardness in word choice
3. Grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors

My Trip to Orlando

I think the most memorable trip I've taken, would have to be my trip to Orlando Florida in the summer of 2000. After having to sit for approximately sixteen hour, in a hot van with my parents and my three siblings, I was glad to have gotten there. After my family and I unpacked the van my sister got our suits on and were ready for a dip in the swimming pool.

The next day we decided to go to Universal Studios Island's of Adventure. There I decided I wanted to go on a roller coaster called the "Hulk", along with my sister Hana and my mom we went to get in line. When we were finally on the ride, you could feel the wind blowing through your hair. It feels like a rush when it takes you up-side down and weaves you in and out of spirals, all of this is happening while your standing up. When you get off the ride you still feel like your on it for about five seconds after the ride has ended.

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Score 3

The writer attempts to convey a main impression but fails to adequately support the main idea with details.

Strong Point:

1. Conveys a main impression

Problem Points:

1. Sensory details not consistently effective or supportive
2. Lacks organization in some parts
3. Grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors

Over spring break I went to El Salvador and I really liked it. It was the best place I have ever visited. There they had lots of things to do, and nobody spoke english.

El Salvador had lots of things to do. I likes to go around looking at all of the shops that were in the center of the town that I stayed in Suchitoto. The shops were really small and had lots of jewelery. I think many of the shops there are allways trying to make more money by selling jewelery to the tourists. In one store I bought gifts for my friends. The town was fun and thats why my trip will be memoriable.

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Think of a memorable trip you have taken somewhere such as to the beach, a relative's home, a big city, or even to the supermarket. Write a description of the trip and the place you visited. Tell why the trip was memorable.

Score 2

The writer's description is disorganized, lacks details, and fails to create a unified impression.

Problem Points:

1. Disorganized and not easy to follow
2. Some details but does not add up to a clear main impression
3. Limited use of sensory details
4. Grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors

The most rememable place that I have been to is Hilton Head island. The things that I like most about the island is the fun things to do at night, the going to the beaches, and what the sky looks like when the sun is going down. Every night they have live bands and special activtes. For the night life they have live music, dancing, karioke, fire works.

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Score 1

The writer's attempt to write a descriptive essay is unsuccessful.

Problem Points:

1. Too brief to assess organization
2. Does not fulfill descriptive purpose or convey clear impression
3. No sensory details
4. Grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors

My favrit place to go is the mall. Me and a bunch of kids go after school and get food and see whats happning there and see who we know. It feels good to hang there and we like to be there.