

Task 1: Write a setting description

For this task, you must pick one of the settings described by our investigator as your chosen scene of the crime. You need to write a description of the setting with as much detail as you like. You can use what you've seen and heard and add your own creativity! Use the clues sheet to help you if you can't remember and make sure you write in the third person and past tense.

Hints and tips:

Senses:

Think about all that is around you. You do not have to include everything, just what is relevant to creating the image of the setting you want.

What can you hear? What can you see? What can you smell?

What can you touch? (not just with your hands, you could think about underfoot e.g. rotten floorboards or a breeze against your skin). What does it make you feel emotionally?

Mood:

Think about what mood you want to create in your writing. Is it dark and gloomy or bright and joyful? Could your setting be mysterious or somehow communicating with you? Tip: Write down lots of adjectives and adverbs before you start that may help you to set the mood in your own mind.

Show me, don't tell me:

You don't always have to be obvious with what you are saying. Think of the image you are trying to create and then try to describe it rather than just say it.

For example, instead of saying: 'The room was bright and sunny', you could think of other ways of showing this. It could be as simple as 'the room was lit up by the dazzling sun' or more complex such as: 'rays of sunshine burst through the windows, like explorers searching every nook and cranny, whilst the faces in the portraits basked in the warmth of the morning glow.'

Zoom in:

Begin by describing the room as if you were standing in the doorway- large features like the windows and walls or the space- essentially the first things you see. Then zoom in by adding more detail to smaller items like books, surfaces, decoration or furniture by adding lots of description.

Tip: In this task, it may be worth really focussing closely on the clues that were explained!

For Scholarly Sorcerers:

Why not try to use personification to help you describe. Give everyday objects like tables, chairs, windows or curtains human features and a personality. Do the hinges on the doors scream a warning as they are opened or do the long-since melted candles reach exhaustedly for the comfort of lying down?

Task 2: Write a character description

Now you have seen and heard about some of the people who were lurking around the school, you need to pick the one that you think is the most suspicious.

When you have decided, write a description of the character, imagining that you are watching them move around the room. Remember, the more detail the better for catching the criminal. It should be written in third person and past tense.

Hints and tips:

Mood: Once again, think about the mood you want to create before starting. Is your character scary, mean, jolly, intimidating or friendly? Are they big and lumbering or small and dainty? Jot down some adjectives and adverbs that could help to create this tone.

Looks: What are the first impressions they give? What are they wearing? What size or shape are they? How can these things give us clues to their character?

Like with the setting, start wide, with an overall impression, and then zoom in on aspects like facial features, hands or feet to really help bring your image to life.

Actions: What do they do and how?

Do they stride or shuffle when they walk? Think of an effective verb and then combine it with an adverb. Do they move hurriedly, patiently, sneakily or confidently?

What other mannerisms do they have? Do they stand with their shoulders back and chin raised or do they crouch low and keep their eyes on the floor. Maybe they grind their teeth, breathe heavily, scratch their hands or look around shiftily. Use actions to portray their personality.

Language: Use the most adventurous and descriptive language you can.

We have mentioned adverbs and adjectives but you can also try similes (like or as) or metaphors (they are). E.g:

Her eyes, like a snake, hungrily search for prey. (simile)

Or

His hair was a glacier of ice, cascading through the valley, parted only by the pointed peaks and hills of his sharp and cold face. (metaphor)

For Scholarly Sorcerers:

You could use an extended metaphor. This is like a theme running through the description, for example darkness, fire or an animal e.g. snake-like features.

When describing the character, you would continually return to the idea of them being linked to the theme of your choice.

Task 3: to write a description of events to solve the mystery

Now you've heard all of the evidence and decided on the setting and the character, you need to describe what actually happened.

Once you have these events in your mind, put them together with your character description and the scene setting to create a description of what happened. You do not have to name the culprit if you don't want to; a detailed description will be enough to find them and bring them to justice!

Hints and Tips:

Use the information you have gathered and your imagination to make a plan or timeline including answers to some or all of the following questions:

How did they enter and when did they enter?

What was going on when they arrived?

How did they shrink them- what did they use?

Was there any interaction between them and how did they react?

Did everything go to plan or were there mishaps along the way?

How did they leave or escape?

For Scholarly Sorcerers:

How many types of sentence openers can you include?

Adverb: Carefully, sneakily, desperately

Verb: Staring, sneaking, creeping

Preposition (where): In, on, under, near, beside

Preposition (when): After, seconds later, just before

Subject: Cobwebs, the table, a gust of wind, he, she

VSS (Very short sentence): It was done. She was gone. Silence took over

Ed: Exhausted, Defeated, Excited.