

IDLEWILD & SOAKZONE
PRESENTS



WILD ABOUT WORDS

AN EXCITING LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM

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Describing the Senses in Writing

In order to draw the reader into your writing, you must describe how things look, taste, smell, feel, and sound. In this exercise you will notice sensory details that can help you recreate an experience and share it effectively with others.

You will need a pencil and blank paper from the back of this packet. You should now choose a picturesque spot in Idlewild and make yourself comfortable. Listen carefully as your teacher guides you through a tour of your own senses as you prepare to write about Idlewild.



The memories you capture on paper today will help you to write vivid, descriptive passages that will draw the reader into your writing. Be sure to save your pre-writing pages in your working folder to use as a springboard for other writing exercises back in the classroom or at home.

You are a Wordsmith!



Just as a blacksmith forges and hammers iron into shapes, a wordsmith works with words to find just the right fit for a great piece of writing. A wordsmith's tools are usually a thesaurus and a dictionary.

A thesaurus is a dictionary of synonyms (words that have similar meanings) and antonyms (words that have opposite meanings) which can help you find the best words for the message you wish to convey to your reader. When you see a thesaurus, you will find that it is easy to be a good writer. For instance, if the only word you can think of to describe the motion of the paddle boats is “slow”, the thesaurus can give you more picturesque suggestions such a “leisurely”, “gentle”, “slow-sailing”, or “easy-moving”. If you had already used the word “slanted” to describe the floor of Confusion Hill, the thesaurus will suggest other terms like “tilted”. “sloping”, “leaning”, or “inclined”. Using a thesaurus is like having a personal writing coach.

The dictionary should also be handy whenever you write to help you be certain that the words you choose have the meaning you wish to convey. For example, the word “fastidious” may sound to you as though it has something to do with speed, but the real meaning is “reflecting a meticulous or demanding attitude; difficult to please.”

The dictionary and thesaurus are tools which can give vivid, specific meaning to your words, and will give you confidence in your writing. Once you start using these writer's tools, you will find that your writing will improve rapidly!

Be sure to have a dictionary and thesaurus nearby when you begin to write your own prose or poetry. Oh—and don't forget to show your work to the quality control people—your peer editors!

Wordsmith Practice

Using a thesaurus and a dictionary

As you look around you in the park, fill in the blanks with your input about Idlewild. When you are back at home or in the classroom, check the thesaurus for words that may be even more fitting or descriptive than the ones that come in mind today. If you are unsure of the meaning of any word, check the dictionary to make sure it is suitable.

I like to ride the _____ because it
_____ and _____

I enjoy watching _____.

He/she/it they _____ and _____.

My favorite food at the park is _____.

I enjoy it because it tastes _____ and _____.

If I could add one more thing to Idlewild, it would be a _____
_____.





Things to Love

at

Idlewild & SoakZone



The purpose of this assignment is to engage the senses in writing. Although some things may best be stated briefly and simply, writing is usually more interesting when it involves vivid descriptions using sensory details.

Remember that phrases develop as ideas develop. When you first get an idea, allow it to evolve until it is just right – not too short, but not too long. For instance, if you were asked to write about your ten favorite things, the first thing that might come to mind is “Summer”. That’s fine, but it gives the reader only a vague idea that there are things you like about summer. “Going on vacation with my family during the summer” is a little more descriptive, but the reader is still left with little or no idea of the actual memories you have in mind. If you say something very specific, however, such as, “Sleeping in on the first morning of summer vacation,” readers can relate to your writing and understand just what you mean.

For another example, let’s say you wanted to write about food. If you just say “French Fries”, the reader might imagine any variety of fries. If you write “fresh, hot Potato Patch fries with lots of melted cheese,” the reader can picture and almost taste the kind of fries you enjoy.

Using your pre-writing pages from “Describing the Senses in Writing,” write five “Things to Love at Idlewild.” Write in a way that enables the reader to say, “Yes! I know what you mean!”



 Things to Love 
at
Idlewild & SoakZone

1. _____

2. _____

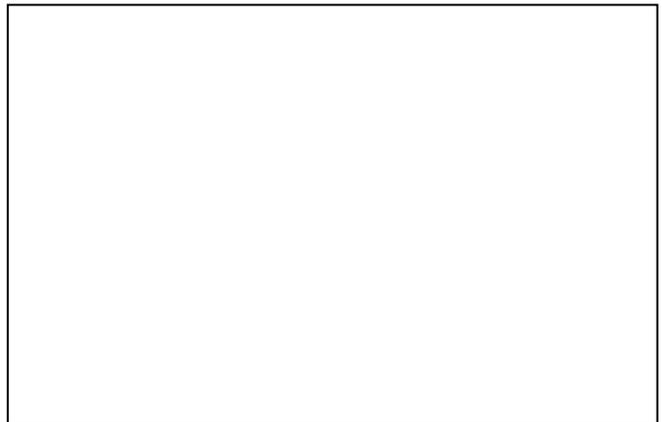
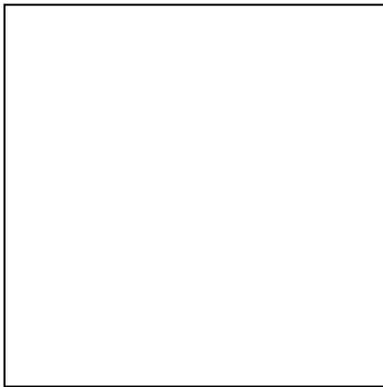
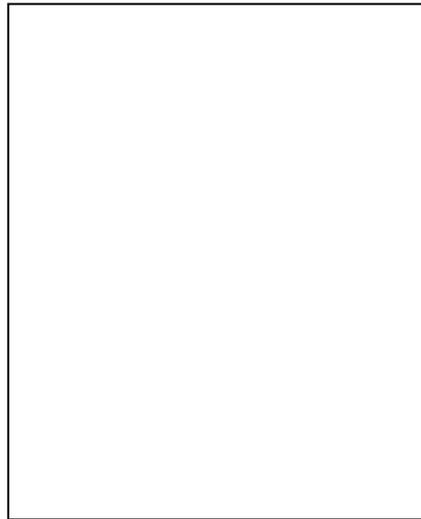
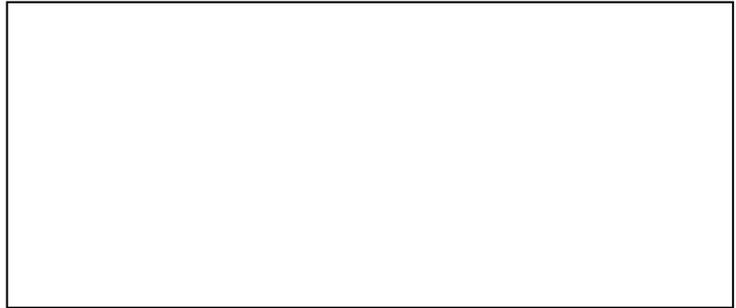
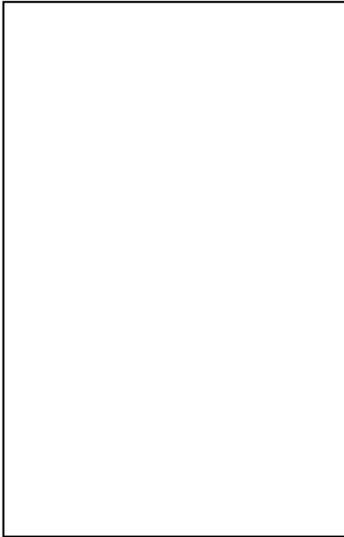
3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

THINGS I'LL MISS ABOUT _____ GRADE

Now that you've had practice using the senses in writing, use those same skills to record your pleasant memories about this past school year. Use this sheet to brainstorm images that include the senses—sights, sounds, touches, smells, and tastes. Don't forget to explore the feelings that went with these sensations. Turn those thoughts into descriptive writing that will help you to preserve your memories. Use the next page to record your finished phrases.



THINGS I'LL MISS ABOUT

_____ **GRADE**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Arranging ACROSTICS

In an acrostic poem, the subject of the poem is spelled out in the first letter of each line. Here is an example:

Towering giants

Rustling softly

Exercising

Ever-so-gently—

Swish, swish, swish



Using ideas from today's park visit, write an acrostic poem that tells the reader something about the word you are using. Your acrostic poem may be serious or funny. If you have time, try writing one with your own name or the name of a friend or family member.

Carefree

Hockey fan

Roller coaster rider

Ice cream lover

Seldom serious



Try your own acrostic poem on the following page. Enjoy!

WILD ABOUT WORDS

REVISION SHEET – CONTENT

Your name _____

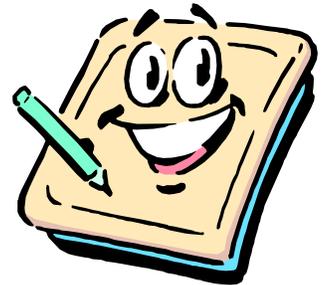
Author's name _____

What I liked best about this piece:

Other things about this writing:

What I found confusing:

What the author could add:



What the author could take out:

What the author could improve upon:

My other comments:

WILD ABOUT WORDS

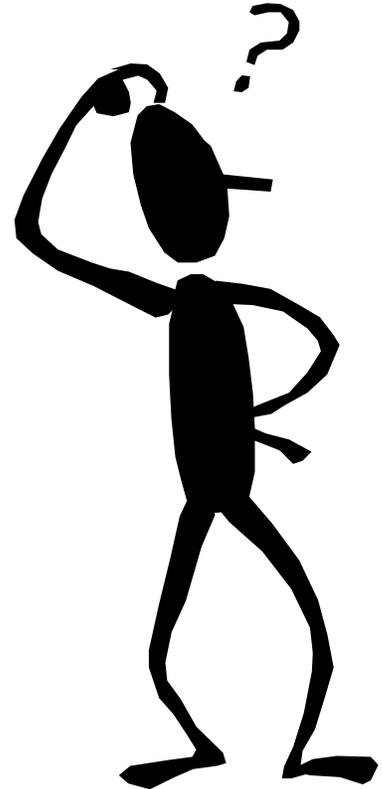
EDITING SHEET – CORRECTNESS

Your name _____

Author's name _____

Sit with the author and proofread his or her paper for correctness. Using the following checklist, mark any items that you think the author should check before publishing this work. Write your feelings on this sheet so that the author remembers what you discuss.

- ✓ **SPELLING –**
- ✓ **CAPITALIZATION –**
- ✓ **PUNCTUATION (END MARKS) –**
- ✓ **PUNCTUATION (INTERNAL)**
- ✓ **RUN-ON SENTENCES AND/OR FRAGMENT**
- ✓ **PARAGRAPHS –**



USE THE BACK OF THIS SHEET FOR ADDITIONAL COMMENTS.

SCORING GUIDE FOR A LANGUAGE ARTS PROJECT



SCORE

CRITERIA

6

- * Follows the directions given
- * Insightfully addresses the task
- * Sophisticated ideas are well developed
- * Content is substantial, specific, and illustrative
- * Demonstrates effective use of vocabulary
- * Project is presented in a neat and attractive manner

5

- * Follows the directions given
- * Effectively addresses the task
- * Sophisticated ideas are well developed
- * Content is specific and illustrative
- * Demonstrates effective use of vocabulary
- * Project is presented in a neat and attractive manner
- * Contains few minor grammatical/spelling errors

4

- * Follows most of the directions given
- * Addresses the task
- * Ideas are mostly developed
- * Content is sufficient
- * Demonstrates effective use of vocabulary
- * Needs improvement in neatness/packaging/artwork
- * Mechanical, usage, or spelling errors are not severe enough to interfere with the writer's purpose

3

- * Follows some of the directions given
- * Marginally addresses the task
- * Somewhat inappropriate or insufficient details to support ideas
- * Content limited to listing, repetition, or sequence
- * Demonstrates adequate use of vocabulary
- * Needs improvement in neatness/packaging/artwork
- * Repeated weakness in mechanics, usage, or spelling

2

- * Follows few of the directions given
- * Strays noticeably from the task
- * Ideas supported only by few or inappropriate details
- * Superficial or weak content
- * Vocabulary is below classroom expectations
- * Hastily completed – neatness/packaging/artwork lacking
- * Mechanical, usage, or spelling errors severe enough to interfere with writer's purpose

1

- * Does not follow the directions given
- * Does not address the task
- * Ideas are not developed or supported by details