

Philological sciences

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DIVERGENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN NARRATIVE AND DESCRIPTIVE COMPOSITION

The most common types of writing assignments students encounter in composition classes are exposition, argument, narration and description. While all these modes allow a writer to explain an idea or event, they differ in the specific intent. A narrative tells a story about an event, while description creates a picture of a person, place, thing or event for the reader.

Descriptive writing relies on sensory detail: sight, sound, taste, touch and smell to create a three-dimensional portrayal of an object, person, place, emotion or even an idea. The purpose is to give the reader as much detail as possible and to describe the subject in a new way that makes the subject unforgettable. The famous novel "A Confederacy of Dunces" by John Kennedy Toole, starts with this description: "A green hunting cap squeezed the top of the fleshy balloon of a head. The green earflaps, full of large ears and uncut hair and the fine bristles that grew in the ears themselves, stuck out on either side like turn signals indicating two directions at once." Toole accomplishes a memorable description of the title character by utilizing spatial organization and figurative language, techniques all writers can master with practice.

Descriptive writing uses illustrative or spatial organization to create a logical image of the subject. Directional signal words, such as below or above, help readers follow along with transitions in your descriptions. If we are describing something abstract, we should use illustrative signal words such as in addition, and for example. Figurative language makes descriptive writing

unique. Metaphors and similes help readers imagine a subject by comparing it directly to another more familiar item. When applicable, we use sound devices such as onomatopoeia and alliteration to help readers envision subjects more clearly. Small assignments with limited word counts describing tangible or concrete items will help students build the skills needed to write descriptively. [2, p.15]

Narrative writing attempts to tell a story, but often can use description to help readers picture the elements involved. Narrative writing has a point of view, which usually is first-person or third-person. Herman Melville's opening lines to "Moby Dick" establish a first-person narration: "Call me Ishmael. Some years ago -- never mind how long precisely -- having little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the watery part of the world." Narrative writing includes characters, a setting and a plot of events -- exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution. Narrative writing also develops a moral or theme for its readers through the integration of various fictional elements.

Narrative writing uses chronological or time order to describe a sequence of events. Sequence signal words, such as first, second and next, help move a narrative forward. Flashbacks and flash-forwards are techniques used to jump through time and switch between different points of view. Foreshadowing or hinting at something before it happens is a technique that entices readers to continue reading. Narrative writing often contains dialogue or conversations between characters, which helps move the action forward and allows readers to connect with characters. While narrative writing includes detailed descriptions, the narrative writer needs to focus on telling a logical story.

A narrative often reflects our personal experience, explaining what happened during some sort of experience. Stories are narrative, and narrative essays have a similar purpose of telling the events to a reader. Narrative essay topics include recounting an experience where we learned something significant,

our first day at school, our first job interview, a frightening encounter, an experience that changed our life and two differing versions of the same event. Narration is not always a personal experience, though; a book report is narrative since it typically spells out the plot of the book or story.

Description uses sensory detail (sights, sounds, tactile sensations, tastes and smells) to describe a scene, person or feeling to a reader. As we describe, we create a three-dimensional picture so our reader can experience the item, place, person or emotion along with the reading. Descriptive essay topics include our favorite place, your bedroom, your best friend, the most unusual object you own, an art exhibit, the best or worst teacher we ever had, our ideal job or dream home.

A personal narrative tells a story about the writer, while a descriptive essay seeks to describe an object, person, place, event or emotion. A narrative primarily develops the writer's ideas in the form of a story with a beginning, middle and end. A descriptive essay focuses on leaving a vivid impression in the mind of the reader by providing details that focus on the five senses and on feelings and experiences.

The thesis sentence in a narrative provides the main point of the story. A narrative essay about a lesson learned could begin with the lesson **e.g.** "I found out it was a bad idea to steal candy when I was 5 years old." Thesis sentences for descriptive essays focus on the primary elements of the events or experience you are describing. A thesis sentence for a holiday descriptive essay could be "Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday because of the delicious food and the time our family spends together."

Narrative tells a story, it is one of the few types of essays that can feature paragraphs that are only one sentence or even only one word long. Telling a story about ourselves or others can include dialogue and action paragraphs that are very brief, such as, "Hey!" to present an interjection. Descriptive essays may

also contain dialogue, but they typically have longer paragraphs with topic sentences and supporting details that include senses and emotions.

A narrative can conclude with a single sentence. For example, a narrative about how we learned stealing was wrong could conclude with "After my mother took me home from the store, I was so embarrassed that I never stole again." In a descriptive essay, the conclusion should echo the thesis. For example, the concluding sentence of a descriptive essay about Thanksgiving could be "The turkey was the most delicious I've ever had, and it tasted better because our family was together at the table."

Narration often employs first person point of view, using words like "I" and "me," while other modes including description do not. The biggest difference between the two is that a narrative essay includes action, but the descriptive essay does not. Narration follows a logical order, typically chronological. In contrast, description typically contains no time elements, so organize descriptive essays by some other reasonable means, such as how you physically move around in a space or with a paragraph for each of the senses we use.

The primary purpose of descriptive writing is to describe a person, place or thing in such a way that a picture is formed in the reader's mind. Capturing an event through descriptive writing involves paying close attention to the details by using all of our five senses. Teaching students to write more descriptively will improve their writing by making it more interesting and engaging to read.

Descriptive essays generally focus on a person, a place, an event, or a thing. Writers convey an idea about their topic by describing the topic for the reader in a 'show, not tell' manner.

Showing and not telling means that you paint a picture for your reader. A better way to understand it is to relate yourself with a life incident like a time where you might have seen a tree next to a river later you take down notes on the sensory type feelings you had and use that in your final draft.

Both narrative and descriptive essays should follow essay format with an introductory paragraph, body paragraphs and a concluding paragraph. At the end of the introduction, place a thesis, a sentence that explains the overall purpose of your paper. You should give a reason for your narration or description in that thesis, explaining why this event, person, place or thing is important enough for you to write about. [3] The thesis might express that you are telling a story because you learned something significant or that you are describing a place that creates a sense of calm in your life. In both narration and description, include specific details in the body paragraphs to support the idea set forth in your thesis.

Literature:

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2. Smith M., Tolisano C. The art of composition: writing the essay. Publishing essays, 2005.
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