

Descriptive Writing

Describing a Setting



WALT

- To describe setting

Success Criteria

- To understand the terms 'setting' and 'atmosphere'.
- To use descriptive techniques to describe a setting.
- To be able to identify a range of descriptive techniques in a setting description.

What Does 'Setting' Mean?

Every story has a 'setting'.



Pause for Thought
What do you think
this means?

Every good story creates 'atmosphere'.



Pause for Thought
What do you think
this means?



Key Terms

setting - where a story
takes place

atmosphere - the tone or
mood created

Why Is the Setting Important?



Just like when you describe a character, the reader has to visualise where the story is taking place.

We all want readers to engage with and enjoy our writing. A descriptive setting in narrative writing helps the reader to do this.



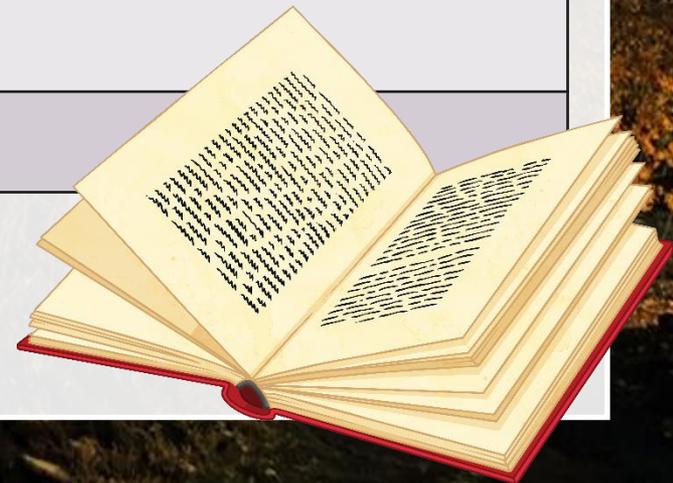
Key Terms

genre – the style or category of a novel

Create a table like the one below:

Book Title/Genre	Setting	Atmosphere
Holes, adventure	Middle of desert	Lonely/isolated/difficult conditions

Complete the table with **at least three more examples** from books you have read.



Take a Closer Look



With a partner, highlight where the setting is described and where atmosphere is created.

The boys moved off and disappeared in the gloom. Before long, they were wading through the tall grass of the ghastly graveyard. It was a graveyard of the old-fashioned western kind; a large crypt surrounded by smaller graves on a hill just beyond the village. It had a crazy board fence around it, which leaned inwards in places, and outwards in others. 'Sacred to the memory of So-and-So' had been painted onto or etched into the tired faces of each of the tombstones once, but it could no longer be read on the most of them, even in the light of day.

A faint wind moaned through the trees, and Tom feared it might be the spirits of the dead complaining at being disturbed. The boys talked little, and only under their breath when they did. It seemed appropriate.

Finally, they found the place they were seeking. Then, they waited in silence for what seemed like an hour. Tom's reflections grew oppressive. He had to speak out to break the tension: "Hucky, do you believe the dead people like it for us to be here?"

Take a Closer Look



With a partner, highlight where the **setting** is described and where **atmosphere** is created.

The boys moved off and disappeared in **the gloom**. Before long, they were wading through the **tall grass of the ghastly graveyard**. **It was a graveyard of the old-fashioned western kind; a large crypt surrounded by smaller graves on a hill just beyond the village. It had a crazy board fence around it, which leaned inwards in places, and outwards in others. 'Sacred to the memory of So-and-So' had been painted onto or etched into the tired faces of each of the tombstones once, but it could no longer be read on the most of them, even in the light of day.**

A faint wind moaned through the trees, and Tom feared it might be the spirits of the dead complaining at being disturbed. The boys talked little, and only under their breath when they did. **It seemed appropriate.**

Finally, they found the place they were seeking. Then, they waited in silence for what seemed like an hour. Tom's reflections grew oppressive. He had to speak out to **break the tension**: "Hucky, do you believe the dead people like it for us to be here?"

Further Investigation

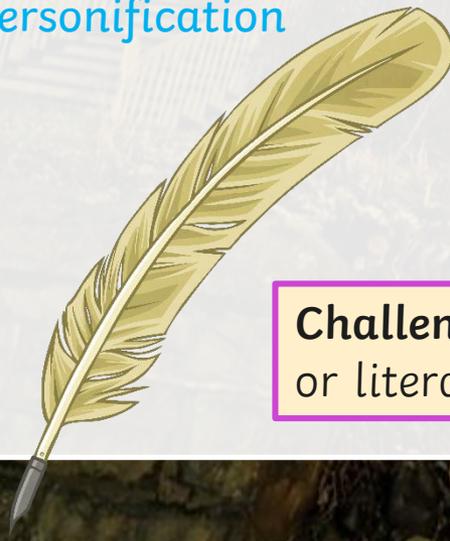


It is likely that you found that the two were linked together. This is because effective description of a setting also helps to create atmosphere for the reader.

Join with another pair to do some more annotation of the extract.

Can you find any of the following? You may colour code if you wish:

1. adjectives/noun phrases
2. powerful verb choices
3. metaphors/personification
4. alliteration



Pause for Thought

Why might it be difficult to spot individual techniques?

The best writers combine techniques.

Challenge: Are there any other word classes or literary techniques you can spot?

Further Investigation

The boys moved off and **disappeared** in the gloom. Before long, they were **wading** through the **tall grass** of the **ghastly graveyard**. It was a graveyard of **the old-fashioned western kind**; a **large crypt** **surrounded** by **smaller graves** on a hill just beyond the village. It had a **crazy board fence** around it, which **leaned inwards** in places, and outwards in others. 'Sacred to the memory of So-and-So' had been painted onto or **etched** into the **tired faces** of each of the tombstones **once**, but it could **no longer** be read on the most of them, even in the light of day.

A **faint wind moaned through the trees**, and Tom **feared** it might be the spirits of the dead complaining at being **disturbed**. The boys **talked little**, and only **under their breath** when they did. It seemed appropriate.

1. **adjectives/noun phrases**
2. **powerful verb choices**
3. **metaphors/personification**
4. **alliteration**



You may also notice some **adverbial phrases**.

Consider the Image



Consider the two images below:

In your pair, pick out as many interesting details as possible that you think could be described about one of the settings.



Make a list of words to describe the type of atmosphere you would want to create when describing this setting.

Create a table, like the one shown:

Details to Describe	Type of Atmosphere

Time to Get Creative



Choose one of the images below: it does not have to be the image you worked on in your pair.



Task: write a story using the setting and characters.

Challenge:

Can you use pathetic fallacy?

in the story.

Aim to use:

Adjectives/Noun phrases

Alliteration

Personification

Metaphors

Powerful verb choices/adverbs

Similes

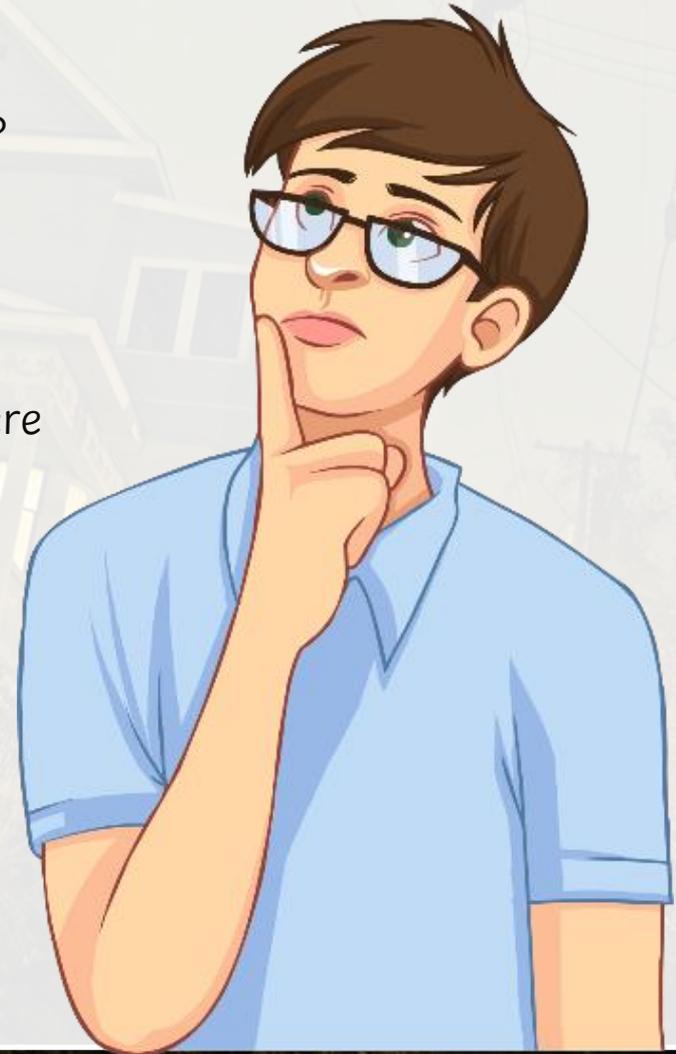


Plenary



Swap pieces of writing with your partner:

- Can you identify which image they used?
- Can you identify any descriptive techniques they have used?
- Can you highlight any specific areas where they have described the setting?
- Can you discuss with them the type of atmosphere you feel they have created?





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