

4 Descriptive Writing— a Sensory Moment in Time

It is important for students to develop historic empathy for both ordinary and extraordinary characters. Understanding how characters felt in the context of the time in which they lived is a challenging but necessary skill to understand history. For example, President Andrew Jackson may have cared about the well being of Native Americans but he knew that he would have to use military force against Americans in order to prevent them from moving on to Indian Land. This would have been impossible in the context of his day and he would have been frustrated with the result of the Trail of Tears.

Instructions:

1. Students must first read and investigate the topic in-depth. For instance, students must have an in-depth understanding of the details related to the Trail of Tears.
2. Ask students to create a list of ordinary and extraordinary characters from the period of study. For example, President Jackson, a Georgia farmer, a young Cherokee boy, or a Cherokee Chief.
3. Students research the information on one of the characters.
4. They then place the character in an event or moment in time. For example, a student could choose a young Cherokee woman during the Trail of Tears.
5. Students brainstorm ideas to complete the visual chart using the senses – sound, sight, taste, feel, and smell.
6. Students complete the chart template (see student sample).

Definition:

Illustration:

If I were there, I would have experienced...

Sounds

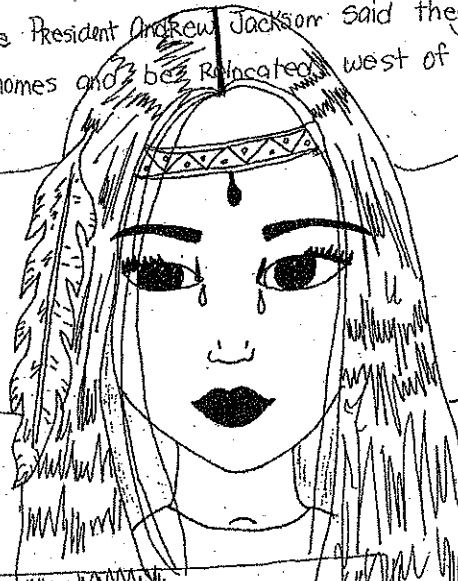
Sight

Taste

Feel

Smell

Definition: In the years 1838-1839 over 17,000 Native Americans were forced to walk over 1,000 miles to Fort Gibson because President Andrew Jackson said they should be removed from their Cherokee homes and be relocated west of the Mississippi River to Oklahoma.



If I was there I would have

Sound ()	Sight ()	Taste ()	Feel ()	SMELL ()
.... Heard:.... seen:.... Tasted:.... Felt:.... SMELL-ed:....
Crying Indians, mourning over their lost relative. Footsteps and... singing to try and keep their faith up.	Thousands of Cherokee Indians weakly walking & heading for hundreds of miles.	The little bits of food that their was to eat. The hatred that has been building up inside of me vs. Andrew Jackson & his soldiers.	The pain & ambushing. Un-fairness. Touched the shoulders of others helping lead them the right way. To follow the trail.	The dirt from the trail, the sweat & exhaust from the Cherokee.

Definition: Child labor was a cheap way for employers to get workers, during the Industrial Revolution. Since children could work the machinery just as well as grown men they took their place. These children, as early as age 7, worked 10-14 hour days 6 days a week. Mass production called for more cheap labor which resulted in more children at work. The working conditions for these children were extremely poor. Many children got their limbs cut off or even died from the machinery.

Sound
She would hear machinery, the cries of children, and her employers voice.

Sight
She would see her work for the day, her parents worn out bodies, and the terrors of the Industrial Revolution.



Taste
She would taste her small amounts of food and the pollution in the air.

Feel
She would feel her worn out hands, the sled of the machinery and her families tears.

Smell
She would smell the polluted air, the sweat from the workers and steam.