

SECTION

6

FORMAL AND
INFORMAL CONTEXTS,
LINEAR NARRATIVE
ESSAY AND
MONOLOGUES AND
DIALOGUES



GRAMMAR WRITING LITERATURE

Grammar Usage

Production and Distribution of Text

Narrative, Drama, Poetry

INTRODUCTION

This section will expose you to the use of appropriate vocabulary in specific contexts, writing short stories using precise words and phrases, and creating monologues and dialogues to boost your confidence in your use of language in everyday discourse-speech and writing. The interactive use of 21st-century skills and inculcation of moral values will also enhance your participation. The use of games and other interactive activities will also make the lessons in this chapter exciting.

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Use appropriate vocabulary in specific contexts (Formal and informal situations)
- Write short stories using precise words and phrases to convey a vivid picture of experiences.
- Create monologues and dialogues in narratives and plays to make meaning.

Key Ideas

- **Formal Language:** They are expressions that are non-personal and used mainly for professional and academic purposes.
- **Informal Language:** They are expressions used in everyday conversations.
- **A narrative** is a piece of writing or a speech that gives an account of events that happen at a particular place and time.
- **Linear narrative** is one in which appropriate linking words are used to show the relationship between or among ideas or sentences and paragraphs.
- **A monologue** is a speech delivered by one person or a long, one-sided conversation.
- **A dialogue** is a conversation between two or more people, often involving an exchange of ideas, opinions or information.

- **Narratives** refer to stories or accounts of events, experiences, or situations that are told through various mediums.
- **Plays** are written narratives that are intended to be performed on stage in front of an audience.

GRAMMAR: LANGUAGE USE IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

Effective communication is key to conveying meaning in discourse. Equally important is using the right language to reflect the context of language use. People do not talk to their superiors the same way they talk with their best friends. Thus, whether you are chatting with a friend on social media or delivering a presentation to a global audience or writing a letter for employment, your language choice will not be the same. They have to vary to reflect the setting – formal or informal. In this lesson, we will explore the use of formal language.

Language is dynamic. Nonetheless, the formality of language must be observed in every context. There are two types of language – **formal** and **informal**. We shall begin with the formal use of language.

Formal Use of Language

Formal language is used in non-personal situations. In other words, it is characterised by an objective tone. It is English that is appropriate for formal reports, formal essays such as job applications, the courtroom, workplace communication, parliamentary proceedings and addresses on solemn occasions. Many of the words used in these contexts are not the same as those used in everyday conversations. Formal language expressions are often long and elaborately constructed. Contractions and slang are hardly used.

For example, in seeking permission to visit the ‘restroom’, you may say “***May I go out, Madam?***” NOT, “***I am going to the washroom.***”

Features of Formal Language

1. It is used in official, professional or academic settings – the Head’s office, Post Office, Parliament House, etc.
2. It is characterised by objective tone, complex vocabulary, precise grammar and syntax.
3. Colloquialisms, slang and contractions must be avoided.
4. Language must be polite and respectful.

For example, in a formal letter applying for a job, we might write:

I believe I will be an asset to your company. I have attached my resume and references as requested. I value your consideration of my application.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Examples of Some Formal Expressions:

1. Commence proceedings
2. Conduct thorough investigation
3. Deliberate and consider
4. Draw a conclusion
5. Facilitate communication/ facilitate a process

Below are examples of Formal and Informal Vocabulary

The contrastive nature of the table is to promote easy understanding of what formal language is not.

Informal	Formal
Tell me more	Elaborate
Be done	Finished
Show	Demonstrate
Give	Provide
Make up	Fabricate
Find out	Discover
Plus	Moreover
So	Thus
Also	Additionally
But	However
Meanwhile	In the interim
In a nutshell	Essentially
Huge	Enormous
Tiny	Diminutive
Okay	Acceptable
Friendly	Amiable
Rude	Disagreeable
Messed up	Damaged

Activity 6.1

1. Act these out with your peers or siblings:

Greeting: a nurse at a hospital, a teacher in your school; a shop attendant at the mall; a driver's mate on a bus, a friend or a younger brother.

2. Which of these responses is more serious and which of them is less serious?

Note down your feedback in a tabular form.

- a. Still with your friend, tell each other some of the expressions you use when you want to be excused from a family gathering and the classroom (what do you say to your friend and what do you say to your teacher).

Note down your responses.

- b. Compare your answers with a friend.

3. Read these two paragraphs on tolerating and accepting divergent views.

- a. Which of them is formal? How do you know?

- b. How are the formal expressions different from the informal ones?

Chill out and let people have different opinions, you know? It's okay if someone doesn't see eye-to-eye with you. Just listen to what they have to say and try to get where they're coming from. You might learn something new or find a fresh perspective. Who knows, you might even change your mind! The point is we can disagree without being disagreeable. Let's keep it civil and have some respect for each other's views.

Tolerating divergent views is an essential aspect of fostering a culture of inclusivity and intellectual diversity. It entails acknowledging the validity of opposing perspectives, even when they contradict one's own beliefs, and engaging in constructive dialogue to better understand the underlying rationales. By embracing this ethos, individuals can cultivate a nuanced understanding of complex issues and develop innovative solutions that incorporate a multiplicity of viewpoints.

- c. With other learners, use the formal language paragraph to act out a scene or two depending on your interpretation of the content.

EXTENDED READING

- Senior Secondary School English Book 1, Naa Afafeley S. et al, Page 193 – 194
- Warriner's English Grammar and Composition, *Fifth Course, Franklin Edition*, John E. Warriner, Page 77 -78.

WRITING: DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

As children or even adults, we are often sent by parents and relatives to either deliver messages to individuals or convey information from some other people somewhere.

When we get there or come back, we give out the information on the subject that we were sent. In our bit to delivering the information, we narrate what has been told us by our sender to our audience. In this lesson, therefore, we will be looking at narrative writing, having our focus on the structure and style of the narrative. Narrative is the act of retelling or giving an account of events or experiences to your audience. Narration is an important aspect of our lives. That is, we cannot live a better life without narratives. It could be done either orally or in writing.

Descriptive writing is a literary technique that aims to create a vivid picture in the reader's mind through detailed sensory observations. This form of writing is used across various genres, including fiction, poetry, and nonfiction, to enhance the reader's experience and immersion in the text.

Key Elements of Descriptive Writing

Sensory Details

Descriptive writing relies heavily on the five senses - sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. By incorporating these sensory details, writers can evoke emotions and create a more immersive experience.

- a. *Sight*:** Use vivid adjectives and specific imagery (e.g., "the golden rays of the sun filtered through the emerald leaves").
- b. *Sound*:** Incorporate auditory details that can enhance the atmosphere (e.g., "the soft rustle of leaves in the gentle breeze").
- c. *Smell*:** Evoke scents that can trigger memories or emotions (e.g., "the sweet aroma of freshly baked bread").
- d. *Taste*:** Describe flavours to make the writing more relatable (e.g., "the tangy zest of a lemon burst on my tongue").
- e. *Touch*:** Use tactile imagery to convey textures (e.g., "the coarse fabric scratched against my skin").

Figurative Language

Figurative language, such as similes, metaphors, and personification, enriches descriptive writing by adding depth and creativity.

- a. **Similes:** Comparisons using "like" or "as" (e.g., "as brave as a lion").
- b. **Metaphors:** Direct comparisons (e.g., "time is a thief").
- c. **Personification:** Giving human traits to non-human elements (e.g., "the wind whispered through the trees").

Strong Word Choice

Choosing precise and evocative words is crucial in descriptive writing. Strong verbs and specific nouns can convey more than generic ones. Instead of "walked," use "strolled," "marched," or "tiptoed" to convey different meanings or emotions.

Show, Don't Tell

This principle emphasises illustrating experiences through action and sensory details rather than simply stating facts. For example, instead of saying "he was scared," show his fear through his actions: "His hands trembled, and his breath quickened as he stepped into the dark room."

Organisational Structure

Descriptive writing can be organised in various ways:

- a. Spatial Order: Describing elements from left to right, top to bottom, or inside to outside.
- b. Chronological Order: Detailing events as they occur in time.
- c. Order of Importance: Highlighting the most significant details first.

Mood and Tone

The mood refers to the emotional atmosphere of the piece, while the tone reflects the writer's attitude. Both can be established through word choice, imagery, and details.

- a. Mood:** Is it joyful, melancholic, tense, or serene?
- b. Tone:** Is it formal, informal, humorous, or serious?

Audience Engagement

Understanding the audience is key to effective descriptive writing. Tailor your language, details, and imagery to resonate with readers, considering their preferences and experiences.

Techniques for Effective Descriptive Writing

1. Use of Strong Verbs: opt for action-oriented language that enhances the narrative.
2. Vivid Imagery: Paint pictures in the reader's mind with detailed descriptions.
3. Emotional Resonance: Connect with readers on an emotional level through relatable details.
4. Revision and Editing: Refine your writing to enhance clarity and impact, removing unnecessary words or clichés.

Examples of Descriptive Writing

1. **Nature Description:** "The sun dipped below the horizon, casting a palette of fiery oranges and purples across the sky, while the gentle waves lapped at the shore, whispering secrets of the deep."
2. **Character Description:** "Her eyes sparkled like emeralds, filled with mischief and curiosity, as her unruly curls danced around her face, framing a smile that could light up the darkest room."

3. **Setting Description:** "The old library smelled of musty pages and polished wood, its towering shelves standing like sentinels, guarding the countless stories waiting to be discovered."

Descriptive writing is a powerful tool that allows writers to convey experiences, emotions, and imagery in a way that resonates with readers. By focusing on sensory details, employing figurative language, and carefully choosing words, writers can create rich, immersive narratives that capture the essence of their subjects. Whether in fiction or nonfiction, mastering the art of descriptive writing can elevate a piece and leave a lasting impression on the audience.

DESCRIPTIVE WRITING AND COHESIVE DEVICES

Using cohesive devices effectively is crucial for creating coherence in descriptive essays. They help link ideas, enhance clarity, and ensure that the reader can easily follow the writer's thoughts. By incorporating a variety of cohesive devices, writers can create more engaging and cohesive narratives that draw readers in and maintain their interest throughout the piece.

Structure of Descriptive Essays

Descriptive essays focus on detailing a person, place, object, or event, appealing to the reader's senses. Like every other type of essay, here's a typical structure:

Introduction

- a. Hook: Start with an engaging sentence to capture attention.
- b. Background Information: Briefly introduce the subject of your description.
- c. Thesis Statement: Present the main idea or purpose of the essay.

Body Paragraphs

- a. Paragraph Structure: Each paragraph should focus on a specific aspect of the subject.
 - i. Topic Sentence: Introduce the main idea of the paragraph.
 - ii. Sensory Details: Use vivid descriptions that appeal to the five senses (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch).
Examples and Anecdotes: Include specific examples or personal stories to illustrate your points.
- b. Organisation:
 - i. Spatial Order: Describe things as they appear in space (left to right, top to bottom).
 - ii. Chronological Order: For events, describe them in the order they occur.
 - iii. Order of Importance: Start with the most important or striking details.

Conclusion

- a. Summary: Recap the main points of the essay.
- b. Reflection: Share your thoughts or feelings about the subject.
- c. Closing Statement: End with a strong statement or call to action that leaves a lasting impression.

This structure helps create a clear, engaging, and immersive experience for the reader.

Types of Descriptive Essays

Descriptive writing can be linear or non-linear depending on what the writer wants to achieve.

Linear Descriptive Writing

This follows a straightforward, chronological order. It presents details in a sequence that makes it easy for the reader to follow along.

Characteristics of Linear Descriptive Writing

1. Clear Structure: Ideas are organised in a logical progression.
 - a. Time-Based: Events or descriptions unfold in a timeline.
 - b. Cohesive Flow: Transitions between ideas are smooth and logical.

Example:

Imagine describing a day at the beach:

- i. Morning: The sun rose over the horizon, casting golden rays on the sand.
- ii. Midday: Families began to arrive, setting up colourful umbrellas and towels.
- iii. Afternoon: Children laughed as they splashed in the waves, while others built sandcastles.
- iv. Evening: The sky turned shades of pink and orange, signalling the end of a perfect day.

Non-Linear Descriptive Writing

This does not follow a chronological order. It can jump between different times, places, or ideas, often creating a more complex narrative.

Characteristics of Non-Linear Writing

1. Fragmented Structure: Ideas may be presented out of sequence.
2. Thematic or Emotional Focus: Emphasises feelings or themes rather than a timeline.
3. Layered Details: Can explore multiple perspectives or settings simultaneously.

Example:

Using the same beach scene, a non-linear approach might look like this:

- i. Memory of Laughter: The sound of children's laughter echoes, reminiscent of a carefree summer.
- ii. Sunset Reflection: A moment of solitude as the sun dips below the horizon, painting the sky with vibrant colours.
- iii. Morning Anticipation: The crisp morning air and the smell of saltwater are a prelude to the adventures ahead.
- iv. Joyful Chaos: The bustling activity of families enjoying their day, each lost in their world of fun.

Linear writing is straightforward and easy to follow, while non-linear writing offers complexity and depth, inviting the reader to piece together the narrative in a more personal way. Both styles can be effective depending on the purpose and message of the writing.

Activity 6.2

Look around you and describe the things you find in the environment.

NB: Invite three friends and perform this activity with them. Do this in turns. Identify the differences and the similarities in your presentations.

Activity 6.3

Describe a typical Independence Day celebration that you have ever witnessed in Ghana.

(What were some of the activities that took place and what made it memorable?)
Write your responses down.

Activity 6.4

Describe a person who inspires you. (How has the person impacted society and what is it about that person that inspires you the most?)

Activity 6.5

Describe all the people you see in the pictures below.

(Identify the type of dress, the colour of dress, their locations and the activities that they are all engaged in).



Fig 6.1: City picture for description



Fig. 6.2: Beach picture for description

Activity 6.6

With three classmates, identify the descriptive words used in the descriptive essay below:

Passage

As I step through the gates of my school, the vibrant sounds of laughter and chatter fill the air. The sun casts a warm glow over the lush green fields, where students are busy engaging in various sporting activities. The majestic school buildings, adorned with colourful murals and inspirational quotes, stand tall and proud, exuding an atmosphere of learning and growth. The scent of freshly cut grass wafts through the air, invigorating my senses and preparing me for another exciting day.

As I make my way to my classroom, I'm greeted by the friendly faces of my classmates and teachers. The sound of chalk scratching on the blackboard and the rustling of notebooks creates a symphony of learning. My teachers, with their infectious enthusiasm and wealth of knowledge, guide us through the intricacies of Mathematics, English, and Science. The classroom buzzes with activity as we engage in lively discussions, debates, and problem-solving exercises, fostering a spirit of collaboration and teamwork.

After a fulfilling day of learning, the final bell rings, signalling the start of extracurricular activities. I join my friends on the football pitch, where we unleash our energy and passion for the beautiful game. As the sun begins to set, casting a golden hue over the school, I reflect on the day's experiences. My school is more than just a place of learning; it's a community that nurtures growth, fosters friendships, and shapes our minds for a brighter future.

EXTENDED READING

- A1 English Language textbook
- Sample texts and pictures from social media
- Old newspapers
- Storybooks

LITERATURE: MONOLOGUES AND DIALOGUES

In our last lesson we learnt about characters and characterisation, we defined a character as a person or animal, or figure represented in a literary work or narrative or in a dramatic piece of work. Today our lesson is about monologues, their types and dialogues. The movies and dramas we watch at home all have aspects of monologues and dialogues which contribute to the development of the plot. There are times you find yourself quietly sitting all by yourself and talking, that is also monologue. No back-and-forth banter is seen in dialogue, and there is no action during the monologue. A monologue is where one character is doing the talking, complaining, telling jokes, or evil laughing. The three characteristics of a dramatic monologue are; a first-person perspective, a silent audience and the slow reveal of character.

Monologue

A monologue is a lengthy speech given by one character in a theatrical work, movie or literary work.

Types of Monologues

1. A soliloquy is a type of monologue in which a character delivers a long speech to him/herself rather than to another character or the audience. In this, the character talking to him or herself tries to analyse his/her thoughts, emotions, or predicaments.
2. Dramatic monologue: A type of monologue that is delivered by a character to another character or to the audience. They tend to be lengthy and often unbroken by the speech of other characters.
3. Interior/Internal monologue: This is a type of monologue in which a character's thoughts are expressed but not vocalized in the world of the story by other means such as words being put on a screen to show what's going on in his or her head while a conversation is taking place or a stage.

Dialogues

A dialogue is a spoken conversation that includes at least two characters. Dialogues create characters, advance the plot of a story and make a text realistic. They are used in various contexts such as;

1. **Literature:** Dialogues are used in plays, short stories, and novels to reveal character traits, advance the plot and exploit themes.
2. **Communication:** Dialogues are the fundamental aspect of human communication, enabling people to exchange ideas, build relationships, and resolve conflicts.
3. **Philosophy:** Dialogues have been used by philosophers throughout history to explore complex ideas, debate theories, and seek truth.
4. **Education:** Dialogues are used in teaching and learning to encourage critical thinking, promote active listening, and foster collaborative learning.
5. **Diplomacy:** Dialogues are used in international relations to resolve conflicts, negotiate treaties, and build diplomatic relationships.
6. **Psychology:** Dialogues are used in therapy to help patients explore their thoughts, feelings and experiences.
7. **Business:** Dialogues are used in meetings, negotiations, and customer service to build relationships, resolve issues, and reach agreements.

Activity 6.3

1. Identify the type of monologue in the narrative below.
Share ideas with your friends on what a monologue is.

NB: Invite two of your peers and perform this task.**Narrative**

One day, I was playing in my backyard, minding my own business when my mother told me the worst news imaginable. It was a peaceful Saturday, and we were spending some time outside, enjoying the weather. Suddenly, her phone went off and she quickly answered it, but I did not care. I was focused on playing with all of my toy cars, smashing them into each other. I could not wait until I was grown up and could drive real cars and smash real cars into something. My mother hung up her phone call and came over to me. She told me that she just received the exciting news that her sister had invited us to go visit her in Florida. I was happy because that meant I could see my cousins again whom I rarely ever see them. I was happy until she told me that we were taking a plane to get there. As soon as she said 'plane, my heart sank, and my hands started sweating. A plane. I could not do a plane ride. People are trapped in a metal can, flying in the air, possibly crashing to their deaths. A plane! No not me. I will walk to Florida...

(<https://www.cram.com>essay>Monologue>)

2. Read the dialogue below and with your friends perform the activities that follow.

LAKUNLE: Let me take it.

SIDI: No.

LAKUNLE: Let me. [Seizes the pail. Some water spills on him.]

SIDI: [delighted.]

There. Wet for your pains.

Have you no shame?

LAKUNLE: That is what the stewpot said to the fire.

Have you no shame at your age

Licking my bottom? But she was, she was tickled.

Just the same

SIDI: The school teacher is full of stories

This morning. And now, if the lesson

Is over, may I have the pail?

LAKUNLE: No, I have told you not to carry loads

On your stubborn head. But you are as stubborn

As an illiterate goat. It is bad for the spine. And it shortens your neck so that very soon.

You will have no neck at all. Do you wish to look

Squashed like my pupils' drawings?

SIDI: Why should that worry me? Haven't you sworn

That my looks do not affect your love?
Yesterday, dragging your knees in the dust,
You said, Sidi, if you were crooked or fat,
And your skin was scaly like a...

Questions

- a. how many people are speaking in the dialogue?
- b. Tell what a dialogue is about.
- c. Still with your friends, explain the meaning of monologue and identify two types in narratives.

EXTENDED READING

- The Lion And The Jewel.
- Fences By August Wilson
- Any Educational Material on Monologue and dialogue with the story.

Review Questions

GRAMMAR

1. Identify a total of **five(5)** words often used at funeral grounds and in a religious service and use each of them to form sentences. This is a written exercise.
2. Read the paragraph below and fill in the blanks:

In Ghana, greetings are an integral part of the cultural ...**i**... and play a significant role in**ii**.... interactions. Upon encountering someone, it is customary to exchange pleasantries, which may include a**iii**.... greeting such as “Akwaaba” (welcome in Akan), “Te bron” (good morning in Bono), “efoa” (how are you in Ewe) or “wo ho te sɛn” (how are you in Akan).

Additionally, ...**iv**.... gestures like handshakes or hugs may accompany these verbal greetings as a sign of respect. In ...**v**... settings, titles such as “Nana” or “Honourable” may be used to address elders or individuals of high stature, while in informal settings, friends and acquaintances may use affectionate terms like “bro” or “sis”.

The warmth of hospitality inherent in Ghanaian greetings reflects the country’s rich cultural values of community and respect for others.

WRITING

1. What sensory details can you include to paint a vivid picture of a bustling market? Describe the sights, sounds, and smells that would immerse the reader in this setting.
2. How would you describe a character’s emotional state using their physical appearance and actions? Provide specific examples that illustrate their feelings without directly stating them.
3. Imagine a serene forest at dawn. What descriptive language would you use to convey the atmosphere and mood of this scene? Include elements of nature that enhance the imagery.
4. In what ways can the use of figurative language, such as metaphors and similes, enhance your descriptive writing? Provide examples of how these devices might deepen the reader’s understanding of a setting or character.
5. How can the structure of a descriptive piece affect the reader’s experience? Discuss how the order of details might influence the mood or tone of your writing.
6. What role does word choice play in creating a specific atmosphere in your descriptive writing? Analyse how different adjectives or verbs can change the perception of a scene or character.
7. Write an introductory paragraph on any event you have ever attended.

LITERATURE

1. State a difference between a monologue and a dialogue.
2. List two types of monologues and two types of dialogues.

REFERENCE

- The LION and THE Jewel

GLOSSARY

Phrase	A phrase is a group of words that functions as a single unit in a sentence.
Balcony	An extension of a building, especially outside a window.
Museum	A dedicated structure or building where many different objects or things are kept for research or study.
Summer	This is one of the longest and hottest seasons or days of the year.

Acknowledgements



Ghana Education
Service (GES)



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