

Task for *Grace*

Language and style extension tasks

Language and style

- Use of imagery, particularly visual imagery
- Use of vignettes – highly detailed descriptive scenes, that paint rich background scenes for the events of the main narrative

Drewe makes use of highly descriptive detail to establish the scenes for the events of his novel. Like watching a cinema scene, the backgrounds for events are richly painted with background figures, events, sights and sounds. This helps to establish the atmosphere for scenes, as well as reveals something about the current mental state of the character narrating at the time.

Learning Task: Descriptive Scenes

Read the following excerpts from the text and complete the questions/activities that follow:

- *On the esplanade, young tattooed fathers with big bellies and hairstyles as old as themselves strutted like lords beside their women and hectic children, smoking cigarettes and swigging beer. (Good family men she decided.) Buskers of varying nationalities and talents, too, had come out to perform in the sunset. Many of them were backpackers trying to raise money, probably no more skilful than the evening strollers watching them, but with new-found serenity she gave them full marks for trying. (p. 4)*
- *The eroded sandy delta and leaf litter of the tidal creek, the freshly torn and stripped branches upstream and the newly uprooted trees indicated the path of the cyclone. But in a place of such thick mangrove forests and wildly variable tides, the storm damage was hardly discernible. Where you noticed a cyclone's passage was in a town. Roofs and power lines down, smashed windows, crushed cars, trees in bedrooms, dazed and broken-winged birds, dead pets in the swimming pool. It was now early autumn; surely it had been the last cyclone of the season. (p. 115)*
- *A light sheen lay like lacquer on the surrounding vegetation, but within half an hour the Ecosystem Nature Walk would look and smell dun and dusty again. From mid-morning the desert began pressing in. The desert always reminded you of its closeness. You would smell it in the easterly wind, taste it, catch its grit in your eyes. She wondered whether the boy was being hidden in the desert. Or in a coastal town, a southern city? She'd kept a close watch on the news. There had been no reports of him being caught. (p. 210)*
- *Back to the spot where he'd found her. Lake Salt End looked just as it had that September morning so many years before. The Great Sandy Desert. The wide basin of red dunes. Stark blue sky blazing down. The air humming. Ants. Bushflies. Crows*

flopping around the scrub. Animal tracks from the night before. But no Fischer snoring in the tent this time. (p. 395)

Students can be divided up into groups and excerpts given to each group, completing this activity as a collaborative endeavour.

Questions and activities

1. For each of the above excerpts explain the location in the text.
 - i. What is going on at the time?
 - ii. Who is the focus character of the narrative at that point?
 - iii. What does the scene reveal about the character?
 - iv. Identify language features used in the scenes (imagery, adjectives/adverbs, metaphor/simile, alliteration, assonance, comparison, parallelism, etc.) and explain their effect.
2. Find five other examples from the text that are rich with descriptive detail to set the scene or established atmosphere. Complete the same questions as above for your own selections.

Extension task:

Choose a scene description from the novel: it should be one rich with visual imagery.

Using either a computer or cut-and-paste from magazines and newspapers, construct a visual collage of the scene. It does not need to be perfect or realistic, but should capture the impression of the scene, busy and rich with visual variety.

[\(ACEEN022\)](#), [\(ACEEN025\)](#), [\(ACEEN027\)](#), [\(ACEEN028\)](#), [\(ACEEN030\)](#), [\(ACEEN035\)](#)

[\(ACEEN039\)](#), [\(ACEEN040\)](#)