

Writing Activity: Setting

Revision is an important step in the writing process. While getting down a first draft takes a lot of creative energy, going back to your writing in order to make edits and figure out how to make your writing stronger is equally important in any writing process.

Creatively, sometimes our best ideas aren't the first ideas we come up with, and it's something you have to work on in steps to make better, like any other skill. Other times, our original ideas might need to be changed entirely after learning something new.

Either way, going back and revising your writing is a great habit to make your story stronger.

Writing Prompt

Rewrite your origin story to make it stronger by including sensory details to describe your villain's setting.

Sensory details are descriptions using details based on the five senses. Our senses (sight, touch, taste, sound, smell) are our primary source of knowledge about the world. Writing that uses specific, sensory details is more likely to bring readers into that world so they can experience what's happening and feel like they are there in the story.

Consider the difference between these sentences with and without sensory details:

The plane flew over.

The buzzing sounds of the plane flew over our heads on that quiet, sunny day.

Using the five senses:

Sight:

What can you see when you look around? Are there colors you notice? Objects that look like giant versions of something small? Creatures running around?

Touch:

What did it feel like? Was the temperature cold like ice? Are there lots of rocks or any special textures?

Taste:

What does it taste like? Sour like gummy worms? Salty like popcorn?

Sound:

What sounds do you hear? Is there background noise? An alarm that goes off?

Smell:

What does it smell like there? Like a morning after it rained? Or like a gym bag?

Still stuck on sensory details?

Here's a quick Brainstorm Activity for practice.

Rewrite the following sentences by adding a descriptive detail based on one of your senses to make your ideas come alive for the reader.

Example:

The pizza tasted bad.

The pizza tasted like cardboard.

My brother cried loud.

The squirrel went up the tree.

We brought popsicles to the barbecue.

Origin Story Revisions

Revise your origin story and make it stronger by adding in details about the setting, or where your story takes place. If you need help brainstorming, use these questions to guide:

Where does the story take place?

What do you SEE in this place? What action do you SEE your villain do every day?

What does this place SOUND like when you walk around?

If you explored for a day, what are some things you could TOUCH?

What's the first thing you SMELL when you wake up there?

Origin Story Template

Once upon a time, there was a _____ named

(DESCRIPTION OF YOUR CHARACTER)

_____ who wanted _____

(CHARACTER'S NAME)

(WHAT YOUR CHARACTER WANTS MORE THAN ANYTHING IN THE WORLD)

because _____

(WHY YOUR CHARACTER WANTS THIS)

They lived in _____ where

(WHERE YOUR STORY TAKES PLACE)

_____ and

(A DETAIL BASED ABOUT WHAT YOU SEE)

(A DETAIL ABOUT THE SOUND)

Before they _____, they used to

(WHAT MAKES THEM A VILLAIN)

_____ like

(WHAT YOUR CHARACTER WAS LIKE AS A BABY)

(A DESCRIPTION ABOUT SOMETHING YOU CAN TOUCH)

But now, _____ only _____

(CHARACTER'S NAME)

(WHAT MAKES YOUR CHARACTER ANGRY)

_____ and tries to _____

(WHAT YOUR CHARACTER WANTS)

so that _____

(WHY YOUR CHARACTER WANTS THIS)

In _____, _____ will always be known

(A DETAIL ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN SMELL THERE)

(CHARACTER'S NAME)

as _____ who

(A DESCRIPTION OF YOUR CHARACTER)

(A DESCRIPTION OF YOUR CHARACTER BASED ON WHAT YOU CAN SEE)