

Scene Writing Exercise

The goal of this exercise is to be able to describe, in detail, in a short amount of time, a very specific situation. Try to make each of these specific and unique as possible. The goal is not to write an entire story or poem in 20 minutes. The goal is to be able to set the stage for a story or poem to take place. Consider keeping this exercise around for future use. Could you potentially take these little scenes further and make them into a full story or poem?

1. Write down 3 occupations
Examples: Doctor, garbage man, cashier at FootLocker
2. Write down 3 concrete nouns (things we can see, taste, hear, smell, and touch)
Examples: Garden hose, empty Gatorade bottle, a two-headed coin
3. 3 locations (we want these to be as unique as possible)

Consider the following questions:

What makes this location different from others like it?

Is it an indoor space? Is it an outdoor space?

If it's indoor, then what room is it?

If it's outdoor, say, if we're in a park, what part of the park are we in – the playground?

Is it a real place? An imaginary one?

4. Pass the paper to the right.
5. On the new paper, circle one of each category.
6. Pass it back to the original owner.
7. Write for 20 minutes incorporating those three circled items. We want to have all of these things appear in this scene.
8. After 20 minutes, pass the paper back to the right.
9. Continue the story or poem, using the same characters and such OR pick 3 new items from the lists.
10. Write for 20 minutes.