



Reading On The Move

Painting Pictures with Words

Imagery is a literary device that creates a mental picture for the reader using the five senses. The five senses are sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. These senses are used to paint a picture for the reader.

Example: Sight: The bright green sprouts pierced through the soil.

Sound: The jet roared overhead.

Touch: The warmth of the sun wrapped around her as if it were giving her a hug.

Taste: The sauce was sweet with coconut and spicy with chilies.

Smell: The air smelled of fresh cut grass.

When writing descriptively, **word choice** is important. Word choice, or the words the author uses, can help the reader to understand the message the author is giving. Good word choice is using descriptive vocabulary that can help the reader to visualize, or see, what the author is writing about.

Example: Compare these two sentences:

1. *The boy pulled the wagon up the hill.*
2. *The young boy struggled to pull the rickety wagon up the steep hill.*

Do you picture the same boy and the same wagon for each of these sentences?

1. What descriptive words were used in the second sentence that changed how you pictured the scene? _____

Below is an example of a poem that uses *imagery*. Notice how the author paints a picture with words.

Autumn

The crisp chill in the air shows my breath.
With winter close on their tail feathers,
The geese point due south, honking goodbye.
Smoke from chimneys tickles my nose and my memories.
The bright red, orange, and yellow leaves
Cling to the limbs until they are crunchy and brown...
And then they FALL.

Now, read the poem again out loud and answer the following questions.

2. What does the author see?

3. What does the author hear?

4. What does the author feel and smell?

How does the author describe:

5. The air: _____

6. The geese: _____

7. The leaves: _____

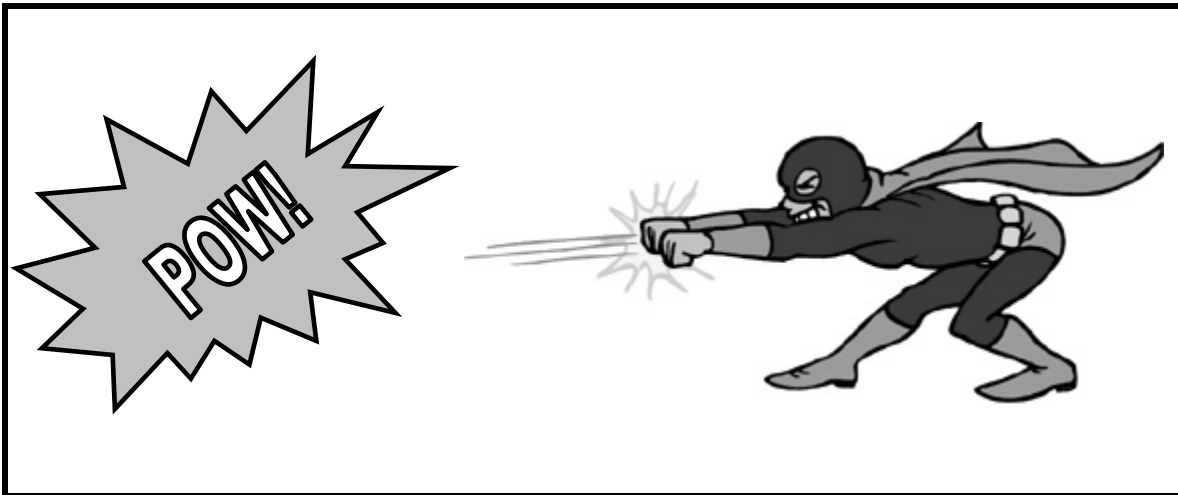
Another way to write descriptively is to use **onomatopoeia** (on-o-mat-o-pee-ya). Onomatopoeias are words that sound like their meaning. For example, *pop*, *sizzle*, *bang*.

Example:



Buzz, buzz, buzzing bee,
Pollen covered wings and feet,
Whirrs out of my sight.

Many comic books use *onomatopoeia* to create sound effects.



8. Read the passage below. Underline any onomatopoeia that you find.

Scratch, scratch, scratch! I rolled over and peeked out of one eye. Her big green eyes were peering at me through the window screen. My eye shut again and I wiggled my face down between two pillows.

“Meeeeooooow!” she screeched.

“Oh, alright,” I sighed as my feet thumped down on the cold cement floor.

Making my way to the kitchen, I could see the shadow leaping from one window to the next. I splashed some milk in a bowl, set it on the windowsill, and poured myself a cup of coffee. It had been the same routine every day for the past two months. As I sat listening to her lap, lap, lapping the milk out of the bowl, I wondered where she had come from and how she found me.

