

Description  
Journalism  
Mr. Schott

The ability to describe something (a person, a place, an event) is a necessary requirement for writing a strong story, whether it is a news or feature story. We will get into the specifics of stories tomorrow. Today, I want you to work on being descriptive and on asking creative questions. Make sure you use all of your senses; don't just focus on what you hear or see.

For this exercise, we're going to observe people interacting, a thing, and a place. Obviously, as a journalist, your job is to observe all three of these, so we'll take the time to do different levels of interaction.

Before we get going on this, we'll watch the following video, from TED-ED, about the power of simple words (link below). Being descriptive does not mean you need to use all of the \$20 dollar words you may learn in English class. It means you need to be accurate and true and convey the meaning of what has occurred.

### **Activity 1**

I will stage a conversation with someone in the classroom (usually another teacher) which I would like you to listen to and observe. The idea behind this is not solely to take notes of what we say, but also notice the tone of the conversation, body language and other non-verbal cues. By reading what you will turn into a description of the conversation, I should be able to get a feel for not only what happened, but how it happened.

### **Activity 2**

On each table there is an object, giving us eight objects. You will have 5 minutes to describe the object at the table. You must write at least 3-4 sentences (a nice, strong paragraph) to describe the object. In addition, you must write 3 questions you would ask the object if it could talk. These should be open-ended questions the

### **Activity 3**

When you have described four different objects – after about half of the hour – we will move to a different area of the school (where often depends on the weather and what's going on at school), where we will describe some sort of activity (usually it's in the cafeteria or P.E. classes).

### **The Power of Simple Words**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dz8E8UOBFJQ&feature=relmfu&safe=active>

### **Final product**

Tomorrow, during class, you will write a lede, nut graf and startling statement from one of these things you have just observed and that we have previously learned about in class.