

Using the Senses in Descriptive Writing

- Writers who can engage the senses of their readers will immerse them deeper into the world of their writing and make whatever they are describing more real.
- Writers do not necessarily need to artificially make reference to all the senses in every piece of description, but the more they imagine themselves in the world of their description as they write, the more likely they are to use senses in their own descriptions.

A. Read the passage below and make a tally of the number of references to each of the senses.

Sight	Hearing	Touch	Taste	Smell

As he entered the space, his first sensation was the cool damp feel on his skin and an almost metallic taste in his mouth. Placing his hand on the rough wall of the cave, he peered warily around the corner and into the large cavern. An unexpected sight met his eyes. Rows of shiny white consoles with computer screens set in them beeped and whistled in low tones. He walked forward a pace, reaching out for the smooth white plastic of the nearest console. He was aware of the low ceiling just inches above him which added to the uneasy feeling he couldn't shake off.

Sometimes writers give their characters a sixth sense or the ability to get information from other sources beyond sight, hearing, touch, taste or smell. Can you see an example of that in the description above?

B. Imagine walking through a rainforest. Can you think of a piece of description to match each of the following senses?

Sight	
Hearing	
Touch	
Taste	
Smell	
6 th Sense	

