Description

Sensation created with words
Description

- Dominant impression and supporting detail
- Clear structure
- Vivid language
- Sensory description
Dominant impression

- “The characteristic your description will focus on” (Clouse 104)
- The thesis of the description
- On the field and in the stands, the excitement of the game filled the stadium.
- Supporting details will support the dominant impression and create the sensation in words (105)
Supporting Details

- **Objective details**: details without judgment (Clouse 105)
  - Red,
  - 40 yards
- **Expressive details**: “Subjective, personal or emotional” (Clouse 105)
  - Old
  - Cluttered
  - Long distance
Structure

- Spatial: space
- Chronological: time
- Climatic: building to a climax
- General to specific
Vivid detail

- Specific concrete words create sense reaction
- Descriptive techniques enhance detail
- Sensory description appeals to specific detail
Descriptive techniques

- Naming
- Detailing
- Comparing
- (Axelrod and Cooper 550)
Naming

- Generally nouns
- “Observable features” (Axelrod and Cooper 550)
- Answers what is it; maybe what’s it doing
- Specific names create sensory impression
- Dillard and Kazin examples (Axelrod and Cooper 550-551)
### Specific words trigger senses

**General**
- Nouns
  - Vehicle
  - Building
  - Dessert
  - Book
- (Clouse 107)

**Specific**
- Nouns
  - 1965 Corvette
  - Nelson Science Center
  - Pecan pie
  - *Sand County Almanac*
- (Clouse 107)
Specific words trigger senses

**General**
- Verbs
  - Move
  - Look
  - Speak
  - hit
- (Clouse 107)

**Specific**
- Verbs
  - Race
  - Stare
  - Scream
  - Slug
- (Clouse 107)
Detailing

- Generally adjectives and adverbs
- Size
- Color
- Condition
- Value
- Both objective and expressive details
- Dillard, Welty, Benioff examples (Axelrod and Cooper 552)
Specific words trigger senses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Specific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Modifiers</td>
<td>• Modifiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “Nice”</td>
<td>• “Elegant”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good</td>
<td>• Succulent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Old</td>
<td>• Ancient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Long</td>
<td>• 80 yards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Small</td>
<td>• minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Clouse 107)</td>
<td>(Clouse 107)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comparing

- **Simile**: a comparison using “like” or “as”
  - He was about as modern as a typewriter.

- **Metaphor**: doesn’t use “like” or “as” the comparison is “described as though it were the other.” (Axelrod and Cooper 553)
  - My father’s anger showed in his eyes: two ice-cold blue daggers.

- Dillard example (Axelrod and Cooper 553)
Sensory description

- Sight
- Hearing
- Smell
- Touch
- Taste
Sight

- Greatest vocabulary
- Names
- Size
- Color
- Shape
- Tan example (Axelrod and Cooper 554)
Hearing

- Generally name sound and source
- Onomatopoeia the word suggests the sound
  - Hiss, crackle
- Synesthesia: using words from another sense
  - Soft hiss
- Frazier example (Axelrod and Cooper 555)
Smell

- Not a huge vocabulary
- Nouns: odor, aroma, smell
- Verbs: smell, sniff
- Adjective: pungent, fetid
- Coyne example (Axelrod and Cooper 556)
Touch

- Few nouns and verbs
- Temperature: hot, cold
- Moisture: wet, dry
- Texture: rough, smooth
- Weight: heavy, light
Taste

- Few direct; most from other senses like smell
- Types: bitter, sweet, sour
- Specific: pungent
- Hemingway example (Axelrod and Cooper 559)
Works Cited
