DESCRIPTOSAURUS
A Language Toolkit and Support for Creative Writing Ages 9 to 12

THICK FOREST
SPIDERY TANGLE OF
CLOAKED IN MIST
TREES, BUSHES,
THORNS AND
GNARLED LIMBS
LIKE GHOSTLY
STOOPED FIGURES

QUIET...
HE WAS
SCARED

HEART
POUNDED
PULSE
RACED
EYES
WIDENED

SUN BLAZED FROM
A VIVID BLUE SKY
WISPY CLOUDS DRIFTED
ACROSS THE SKY

SUMMER'S DAY

BLAZING CARPET
OF BLUEBELLS
TREES BURSTING WITH
BLOSSOM, SYMPHONY
OF SONG BIRDS

Including Instructor and Student Resources with all elements of the book, VCOP coverage, games, planning sheets and vocabulary builders

A David Fulton Book

ALISON WILCOX
Now in its fully updated fourth edition, the bestselling *Descriptosaurus* is the first book for creative writing that is a thematic expansion of a dictionary and a thesaurus; it provides students with a language toolkit with which to expand their descriptive vocabulary, experiment with language and sentence structure and build up narratives based around settings, characters and creatures.

*Descriptosaurus* positions the word, zooms in on it to examine the meaning, expands it into phrases, and then provides alternatives in words, phrases and sentences; the model was created and refined over a number of years as a result of feedback from students inside and outside the classroom as to the resources they required to inspire and assist them with their writing. For reluctant writers or those faced with blank page syndrome, it provides essential starting points to encourage putting pen to paper, not only inspiring students, but also building their confidence, encouraging them to use, apply and create using the correct grammatical structures, and adding colour to their writing through evaluation and experimentation.

New features for this expanded edition include:

- Additional vocabulary, including technical vocabulary for non-fiction topics such as volcanoes, mountains and caves
- An additional chapter to cover the popular primary topic of cold climates and polar exploration
- How to use word clines to expand vocabulary and explore shades of meaning
- Guidelines, resources and models to scaffold learning about grammar
- Sentences that have been expanded and reworked to provide modelled sentences for DFI (Detail, Flow and Impact)
- Guidelines, resources, exercises and models to support the teaching of sentence construction using imitation, combining and expansion techniques

Accompanied by Instructor and Student Resources containing all the games, planning sheets and vocabulary builders from the book, this is an ideal resource to dramatically improve students’ creative writing, confidence and facility with sentence construction for all primary and secondary English teachers, literacy coordinators and parents. It would also make an excellent classroom book for PGCE students, particularly Primary PGCE with English specialism.

**Alison Wilcox** has extensive teaching experience in schools in England and Scotland. Colleagues describe her methods as ‘innovative and inspirational to even the most reluctant of writers’.
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Introduction

WHAT IS DESCRIPTOSAURUS?

_Descriptosaurus_ is an innovative language toolkit: a model of descriptive writing that is a thematic expansion of a dictionary and a thesaurus, but also a guide and resource for developing students' writing skills in the context of a creative or non-fiction writing project.

To achieve clarity, precision, cohesion and rhythm in a piece of writing, it is first necessary to have the requisite knowledge and skills: the vocabulary to describe, the knowledge of the 'grammar tools' available and the structure to organise detail, descriptions, ideas and thoughts.

_Descriptosaurus_ provides students with a comprehensive resource to help them expand their descriptive vocabulary, develop automaticity and facility with sentence construction, and experiment with language and build up texts based around the following areas:

- Settings – landscapes, settlements and atmosphere
- Characters – appearance, emotions and personality
- Creatures – appearance, abilities and habitats.

A dictionary teaches students the meaning of words and a thesaurus expands their vocabulary. _Descriptosaurus_ teaches them how to describe a setting using their senses; how to describe a character using expressions, voice and movement, and how to add detail, depth and colour to their writing. _Descriptosaurus_ positions the words – be it appearance, expression, landscape, smell or sound – classifies them as nouns, adjectives and verbs; zooms in to examine their meaning and then expands them into phrases and sentences. It shows how they can be used and provides alternative sentence structures.

In addition to vocabulary, phrases and sentences for creative writing, _Descriptosaurus_ also includes descriptive language tools for non-fiction topics, such as rainforests, volcanoes and cold climates. It provides a contextualised step-by-step guide and progress chart of the 'grammar tools' available, and a wide variety of models that can be used to explore how the craft tools can be effectively employed for clarity, precision, emphasis and impact. It examines the three most effective methods of teaching grammar in context, namely, sentence imitation, sentence combining and sentence expansion, and provides resources on how to use these methods in a classroom or at home.

The model continues to evolve, with additional components and models being added to each new edition as a result of feedback from students and teachers about the resources they require to inspire and assist them with their writing. For reluctant writers or those faced with the 'blank page syndrome', _Descriptosaurus_ provides invaluable starting points to encourage putting pen to paper. For those students who struggle with sentence construction or who
do not understand what steps to take when revising their texts, *Descriptosaurus* provides a step-by-step scaffold.

Alison is the author of the *Descriptosaurus* series. For many years she worked as a teacher, both in England and Scotland. Whilst teaching, she developed *Descriptosaurus* as a resource for her own teaching to scaffold and develop children’s creative writing, with dramatic results. The first *Descriptosaurus* book was published in 2009 and following its success, Alison gave up full-time teaching to research and write. To keep updated with current practices and issues, Alison has been involved in a number of research projects. She has done presentations for the World Education Summit, works with schools to develop new resources, and conducts workshops for organisations, teaching alliances and schools. Alison contributed a chapter based on the creative writing process to *Teaching Walkthrus 3: Five-Step Guides to Instructional Coaching* by Tom Sherrington and Oliver Caviglioli.

**WHY IS DESCRIPTIVE WRITING IMPORTANT?**

The importance of students being able to express their ideas using good descriptive language is widely accepted, not just for creative writing, but also for non-fiction.

Developing descriptive language to communicate effectively is an essential tool across the curriculum. History is concerned not merely with dates and facts, but with describing and interpreting past events. In geography, students need to be able to describe the natural world and different environments. In science, they need to observe carefully and then be capable of describing what is happening in an experiment. In all areas of the curriculum, students need the vocabulary to enable them to describe, explain and interpret, and the sentence construction skills to be able to communicate their message, knowledge, ideas and thoughts effectively.

To be able to describe, we need to be taught how to look and listen, to learn from the masters about what good writing looks and sounds like, and how it is achieved. We need to learn the vocabulary and grammar tools to use to express our ideas and communicate our message with clarity. As well as encouraging students to use powerful and precise language, *Descriptosaurus* aims to improve their observation skills, both in their own environment and in their reading, and to improve their ability to construct accurate, effective and varied sentences.

We describe sights and events differently because we see and interpret things differently. To any situation or piece of writing we bring our own personality, experiences and imaginations. As educators, both as parents and teachers, we need to open students’ eyes to the world around them and stimulate their imaginations. It is important to give them the confidence to use the grammar tools to experiment with their writing and to understand the effects that can be achieved in their writing by learning from the ‘masters’. With the vocabulary, knowledge and understanding of how to use language to achieve depth and colour in their writing, students will grow in confidence and be motivated to experiment. Over time, students will begin to find their ‘voice’ and develop their own style of writing.

**WHO SHOULD USE DESCRITPSAURUS?**

*Descriptosaurus* is beneficial for students who need assistance with vocabulary, varied sentence structures, acquiring or reinforcing the function, position and punctuation of
‘grammar tools’ or those who suffer from the ‘blank page syndrome’ and need some ideas, inspiration or assistance to get started. It aims to make language learning visible by showing a clear progression to acquiring grammar tools and developing as a writer based on the current state of development of the student not the age-related targets and expectations. This will support students to identify where they are at, what they need to do to improve and where they are aiming; to extend the more able and to correct any misunderstandings or fill in the gaps in the knowledge of struggling writers.

WHERE CAN DESCRIPTOSAURUS BE USED?

Descriptosaurus is a resource that can be used by teachers, and at home or at school by students and parents.

Whilst consideration has been given to specific curricula, Descriptosaurus is a general language toolkit applicable to any writing syllabus in any territory where there is a desire to expand vocabulary, develop automaticity and facility with sentence construction and improve writing.

WHY IS DESCRIPTOSAURUS A USEFUL TOOL FOR PARENTS?

We all agree that there is no substitute for reading to improve students’ writing. However, we live in a world dominated by the moving image, be it television, mobile phones or games consoles. As a teacher, I have encountered the problems reluctant readers face when challenged to write creatively. As a parent, I have encountered the problems of developing a ‘reading habit’ at home alongside an obsession for students to use their fingers to operate a keyboard or console rather than turn a page.

How then can we develop students’ writing when there is a reluctance to read or engage with a text? The answer is to feed their imaginations with pictures, sounds and games, and use Descriptosaurus to describe what they see, hear, smell and touch; to engage students by using authentic writing projects to expand their vocabulary, to teach the grammar tools and to develop automaticity and facility with sentence construction.

In a high-stakes testing environment, teachers, students and parents have never been under as much pressure as they are today to improve writing levels, whether from the demands of SATS and 11 plus exams or any other state or national testing system. Identifying areas of improvement in, for example, maths or science, history or geography is more visible: the answers are right or wrong or require more detail or explanation. These subjects have the benefit of methods and processes that can be followed and mark schemes with model answers which make the progress visible by clearly identifying what the students are aiming to achieve.

Developing writing is a far more complex process with many component parts that need to be mastered, but it is an essential skill to be able to succeed in all curriculum subjects not just English.

For many parents who are not confident writers, they find a language toolkit that not only provides a bank of descriptive vocabulary but also ideas and models that demonstrate how to ‘craft a sentence’ helpful to support their children.
Not only have I witnessed a marked improvement in the descriptive writing of the students using *Descriptosaurus*, but I have also noted an increase in confidence in their parents.

**SUMMARY**

Mastering the craft of writing is a long and difficult journey, and at times students can feel like they are navigating their way through a strange and noisy landscape without a clearly labelled map. The fourth edition of *Descriptosaurus* aims to provide student writers with the vocabulary and tools to help them discover routes through the world of language: to have a visual map to help them develop their vocabulary and an automaticity in sentence construction, and to have a variety of options in their writing toolkit. And by providing ideas, models and activities, it aims to enable teachers to construct maps and routes appropriate to the needs of their students.

**IDEAS FOR PARENTS**

**PLANNING**

When students bring home any piece of writing, the most important assistance a parent can provide is getting them to plan it carefully.

Get your children to mind map words and phrases to answer the questions:

- **Who** – appearance, personality, and emotions (expressions, voice, body language)
- **Where** – senses (sights, sounds, smell, touch)
- **When** – atmosphere (time of year or day, weather).

*Planning sheets which structure this process can be printed from the companion website.*

Frames for action, and character and setting descriptions, including modelled writing, are included on this website. These frames break the text into bite-size chunks, which make it easier to focus on the quality of the writing.

**FILMS**

This is an opportunity to use the moving image to improve creative writing.

Watch a film together and examine how:

- atmosphere and suspense are achieved using:
  - weather
  - light/dark
  - sound
- the body language and tone of a character are used to express their emotions.

**MAKING THE MOST OF JOURNEYS OR FAMILY LEISURE TIME**

When embarking on a journey, use the following as boredom busters.

- Audio books are a great way of passing the time and developing descriptive vocabulary and discussion.
Use a sentence from the ‘Prompt Cards’ section on the companion website for a game of What happened next? or Where is it? Each player can take turns to contribute an idea to each of the questions. The benefit of sharing ideas, imaginations and discussion should not be underestimated. Children can also be encouraged to create their own Prompt Cards and questions.

The alternative version of I Spy on the companion website is a great, fun way of improving children’s vocabulary.

Playing I Can helps improve children’s understanding of how using senses in their descriptive writing can dramatically improve the quality of their work.

The ‘Character Profile Cards’ on the companion website can be used to create interesting and even bizarre characters.

When stuck in a traffic jam, a very amusing game to pass the time is to make up character profiles for the occupants of neighbouring vehicles. Where are they going? What are they going to do? What is their job? What sort of house do they live in? What is interesting about them? Are they famous, a secret agent etc.? How are they feeling? This is a good way of getting children to notice body language. For example, are they drumming their fingers on the steering wheel?

PHOTO ALBUMS, SCRAPBOOKS

Collect photos, postcards, leaflets, travel brochures and pictures from newspapers and magazines.

Make an album of old photos. Instead of listing where the photo was taken, talk about who is in the picture, what they were like, what they did – describe the scene. There may be an opportunity here to practise using dialogue by imagining what the people in the photos are thinking or what they are saying to each other.

Use cuttings and leaflets to produce a scrap album. Collect a list of words and phrases to describe the settings and characters.

The companion website includes a number of additional elements, ideas, frameworks and models to assist with the description of a setting and character.

★ Tour Guide demonstrates how to develop a description of a setting.
★ Missing Person demonstrates how to develop a description of a character.

See also Guess the Portrait in the ‘Games’ section of the website.

CHARACTER CHARADES AND ‘DON’T MOVE’

These can be played at home and are great fun.

SENTENCE STRUCTURES:

Helping students work towards their writing targets can be a minefield for parents: whether it be combining a series of short, choppy sentences; editing a long, confusing, complex sentence; adding description or detail; or understanding terms that many educated in an era where teaching grammar terminology was not a focus have perhaps never previously encountered, such as fronted adverbials, conjunctions, adverbial clauses and relative clauses.
Introduction

Model sentences have been included in each chapter and in the sentence section of Part 4: ‘Grammar in a creative context’ and the *Descriptosaurus Grammar Companion*, which also includes a wealth of structured, scaffolded exercises to support constructing and combining sentences. As knowing how to assist in correcting and re-writing a poorly constructed and confusing complex sentence has been an area raised by many parents, there is also a guide and resource which demonstrates how to de-combine a poorly constructed sentence into a series of base (kernel) sentences and then re-combine it more effectively.

In Part 4 of the main book and in the *Descriptosaurus Grammar Companion*, there are guides, resources and exercises to assist you in supporting your children to develop their sentence construction ability. There are also progress charts which show a clearly defined path to learning and mastering the skill.

**DICTATION**

Developing sentence construction ability depends on strengthening the students' language muscles. As with learning to speak, we do not learn word by word, but phrase by phrase; we hold chunks of a sentence in our heads and then transcribe them onto paper. Those students who struggle with constructing a sentence benefit from explicit exercises to build up their ability to hold those chunks of meaning in their heads and transcribe them correctly onto paper. Dictation is an excellent way of improving this ability.

1. Take a few sentences from a reading book or from *Descriptosaurus*.
2. Dictate them by splitting the sentence into chunks of meaning.

With frequent practice in short bursts, students will be able to transcribe those ‘chunks’ without them having to be repeated a number of times. It is, however, important to go at the pace of the student.

Caution: It is essential to emphasise to students that mistakes are a learning opportunity and to assist them to identify the errors and to work on any misconceptions, not just for sentence construction and punctuation but also spelling. For example, something I have seen frequently is when *where* is spelt as *were* and *have* as *of*. Part 4 of this book provides guidelines and resources to support parents to develop accurate and automatic sentence construction. Additional exercises are provided in the *Descriptosaurus Grammar Companion*.

**IDEAS FOR TEACHERS**

**PLANNING**

When planning a piece of creative writing, use planning sheets, mind maps etc. to collate words and phrases to answer the questions:

- ★ **Who** – appearance, personality, and emotions (expressions, voice, body language)
- ★ **Where** – senses (sights, sounds, smell, touch)
- ★ **When** – atmosphere (time of year or day, weather)

For more ideas, the following sections have been included on the companion website:
Introduction

- Writing tips to build atmosphere, tension and suspense
- Hooks to build interest and tension
- Mountain Pyramids
- Little Red Riding Hood
- Scene Setters
- The Wolf
- Creature description using the opening of *The Iron Man*
- Emotion Riddle
- Missing Person
- Tour Guide
- S/C-I-R
- Planning sheets
- Action frames, description frames for setting and character (these include a model, outline and blank forms).

Part 4 of this book and the *Descriptosaurus Grammar Companion* include:

- grammar tools guidance, investigations and exercises for expanded noun phrases, prepositional phrases, relative clauses and adverb clauses
- sentence imitation exercises
- sentence combining exercises
- sentence expanding exercises
- de-combining poetry to focus on the poet’s craft
- how to create a combining exercise using a class text
- non-fiction combining.

**USE TRADITIONAL STORIES, MYTHS OR LEGENDS**

Take a traditional tale, such as ‘Red Riding Hood’ in which the structure is already in place and get the children to fill in the descriptive detail.

Detailed lessons plans are included in ‘Lesson Plans for Descriptive Writing’ on the companion website.

Myths and legends can be used in much the same way. For example, the journey through the tunnel to meet the Minotaur.

Resources for developing a creature description can be found on the companion website, including a poem, plan, vocabulary bank and a model of how to incorporate the description into the structure of an existing text. The ‘Coming of the Rhinogasaurus’ uses the opening from Ted Hughes’ *The Iron Man*.

**I SPY**

The alternative version of *I Spy* on the companion website is a great, fun way of improving children’s vocabulary.

**I CAN**

Playing *I Can* helps improve children’s understanding of how using senses in their descriptive writing can dramatically improve the quality of their work.
WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

Developing an understanding of the revision stage of the writing process and having strategies to help tackle the process is one of the most fundamental skills to developing students’ writing. For sections where additional detail or description are required to improve a telling sentence, the basis of this technique is asking questions. The Prompt Cards included on the companion website are an ideal resource to demonstrate the development of a telling sentence into a description ‘showing’ what a character was like, or painting a picture of a setting. They can also be used to practise using questions when revising a text. They are designed to stimulate and aid creative writing and encourage the inclusion of a range of senses in a description. The benefit of the Prompt Cards is that they can be used as a quick-fire planning burst (verbally or written), but also as a piece of descriptive writing, poem or to scaffold a story.

Students can be encouraged to create their own Prompt cards and questions from the telling sentences they encounter.

These prompt cards are designed to stimulate students’ imaginations by getting them to consider a number of different settings and the atmosphere that can be created by using their senses. If students need help with ideas or vocabulary, they can use the main Descriptosaurus text to assist them.

The Descriptosaurus Grammar Companion includes a number of telling sentences that can be used to model, scaffold and develop the revision and ‘show not tell’ techniques.

CHARACTER DETECTIVES

Pick a sentence from the Character Profile Cards.
Centre it in a mind map and develop a profile.
See also Missing Person.

WHERE AND WHEN PAIRS GAME

Give the students a number of Setting and Atmosphere Cards. Challenge them to arrange them in pairs by matching a setting card with an atmosphere.

STORY SEQUENCING

The Prompt Cards can be combined with the Character Profile Cards and used in a warm-up activity. Divide the class into groups and give each group a number of cards.
Set the students the challenge of organising the cards into a story and to use the connectives to link the descriptions.

SENTENCE STRUCTURE

The cards can also be used for an activity examining sentence structure and also punctuation. For example:

★ Varying the length of the sentences to build tension (see ‘Writing Tips’).
★ Changing the sentences so that the students make a series of simple, compound or complex sentences.
★ Change the order of the sentences.
**CHARACTER CHARADES AND ‘DON’T MOVE!’**

We continually reinforce to students the need to ‘show not tell’ when developing their characters. These are two easy and fun games that can be used to get the children to really think about character traits and use speech, tone of voice, expressions and movement to describe their characters, but also to devise situations where the character’s reaction and their interaction with other characters clearly demonstrates the character’s personality. There are six levels and the characters and vocabulary get progressively harder. Some of the students may need to look up some of the words in a dictionary to find the meaning and an easier synonym. The games, therefore, also work as vocabulary builders.

**LOCATION POSTERS**

These can be completed in groups for different settings and displayed as prompts. For example, forests, mountains, beaches, islands, water (sea, river, waterfalls), cities, towns, villages.

- A–Z lists for nouns, adjectives and verbs. The work on I Can can be recorded and used to produce these posters.
- Senses mind map (sight, sounds, smells, touch). The work on the Prompt Cards can be used as planning sheets for this activity.

**WANTED POSTERS**

Use the Character Profile Cards to produce:

- A Missing Person poster for a missing hero/heroine or a Missing Person report form. The companion website includes a description frame model, an outline and a blank planning form.
- A Wanted poster for a dangerous villain.

Challenge the students to describe the personality, abilities and exploits of the characters to explain why they need to be found.

*Extension:* The characters are in disguise. The students now need to think of distinguishing features, voice, movements and gestures to include in their description.

**GUESS THE PICTURE/PORTRAIT**

Collect a selection of pictures. (*These could be taken from studies in history, space or geography.*)

- Give each pair or group a selection of three/four numbered pictures.
- Pairs/groups label the pictures with important details that will help identify them.
- Using their notes, describe the picture to the rest of the class who have to guess which of the numbered pictures is being described.

*Extension:* Each group adds extra detail to develop a class description of the picture.

*Portraits:* It is also a useful exercise to develop skills in describing characters. www.npg.org.uk is an excellent source.
ADVERT FOR A HERO/HEROINE

The task for the hero/heroine can be linked to an historical topic. For example, joining an expedition to search for an Egyptian tomb. It can also be linked to a study of legends, where the children can first analyse the personality and abilities of the hero/heroine in the legend and use this information to develop their advert.

Challenge the students to describe the task and the characteristics required to secure the job. They should also include a description of the setting and the perils likely to be encountered.

Extension: Write a Curriculum Vitae and an accompanying letter asking to be considered for the expedition, task or job.

TRAVEL BROCHURES, ADVERTISING PAMPHLETS

Collect photos, postcards, leaflets or cuttings from newspapers, magazines and brochures. Store these in a Setting/Character file.

Make a travel brochure/advertising pamphlet for:

★ an adventure holiday
★ relaxing beach holiday
★ ghost hunting expedition.

POETRY

In Part 4 of this book – Section 2: ‘Phrases and clauses’, the grammar elements of the literacy curriculum have been incorporated into a variety of poetic forms. Using these is an effective way to demonstrate the use of vocabulary and phrases from Descriptosaurus to model the various target sentence structures. It also enables students to approach the task in small, manageable steps by focusing on:

★ word choice
★ the target phrase or clause
★ the sentence structure.

A snow poem and a character have been included to demonstrate how to develop relative clauses, and how to combine them with a participial phrase.

A number of popular poems and poets studied across the age range of this book have been included in the Descriptosaurus Grammar Companion. These have been decombined into a series of kernel sentences for the students to combine and compare with the original. The focus is on the poet’s craft – how (s)he combined the words to achieve the desired effect.

DFI (DETAIL, FLOW AND IMPACT)

Models for each target sentence structure are included in Part 4 of this book – Section 3: ‘Sentences’, and are based on an action scene. The Descriptosaurus Grammar Companion also includes sentences to describe forests, mountains, volcanoes and caves which model
how to vary a sentence using a range of grammar tools to change the rhythm and emphasis of a sentence.

**BUILDING AN ACTION SCENE**

Chapter 68 demonstrates the techniques and sentence construction methods that can be used to build an action scene from a brief outline using words, then phrases and then sentences. It illustrates how to combine the individual sentences into a descriptive paragraph for an action scene, and then experiment with different ways of combining the sentences, openers and varying the sentence length.

These guidelines and models can be used to construct any scene that is the focus of a current writing project.

Models have been included in the *Descriptosaurus Grammar Companion* that demonstrate step by step how to imitate and innovate a passage by a professional author by duplicating the grammar tools and techniques used to achieve the desired emphasis and impact.

**NON-FICTION**

For non-fiction topics, such as Boudica, a sentence combining exercise has been included which demonstrates how to extract the main details of an historical event, write them as either base sentences or as subject and predicate phrases, and then combine them into a passage. The key here is for students to compare their passages with those of their peers and the original, and to elicit what techniques and combinations were the most effective. These exercises have been extended in the *Descriptosaurus Grammar Companion* where they cover topics such as the Great Fire of London and comparing the Ancient Greek societies of Sparta and Athens on the *Descriptosaurus* companion website.
How to use this book

PART 1: OVERVIEW: WORDS – PHRASES – SENTENCES

A. WORDS

Lists nouns, adjectives and verbs that will give you ideas and vocabulary to describe your setting and characters.

Example: A forest where the character is in danger.

If you think of thick, dark, trapped, your description could be:

She was trapped in the thick dark forest.

Does this sentence paint a vivid picture for the reader? No. How can it be improved?

★ Imagine you are looking at your setting through a camera. Zoom in and describe to the reader what you can see. Start with the nouns. For example, if it is a forest: trees, branches, leaves, thorns, undergrowth, fungi etc. Then, move on to the adjectives to describe each item.

★ Use the words in the book to search for vocabulary to paint a more detailed picture.

---

CHAPTER 1: WOODS, FORESTS, JUNGLES AND RAINFORESTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORDS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nouns</strong></td>
<td>Forest, jungle, woodland, trees, treetops, trunks, branches, roots, logs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sky, ceiling, canopy, umbrella, blanket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Floor, carpet, paths, tunnels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leaves, buds, berries, blossoms, flowers, petals, stems, vines, creepers, ivy, brambles, thorns, twigs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bluebells, snowdrops, daffodils, poppies, gorse, heather, hawthorn, rhododendrons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sun, wind, dew, icicles, mist, fog, shadows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjectives</strong></td>
<td>Tall, huge, vast, towering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beautiful, majestic, stunning, spectacular, magnificent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brown, yellow, green, emerald, pink, red, scarlet, crimson, fiery, orange, bronze, purple, blue, white, silver, bright, vivid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dark, black, gloomy, shadowy, misty, eerie, ghostly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thick, dense, spidery, impenetrable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rough, sharp, thorny, spiky, barbed, gnarled, twisted, bent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dead, rotting, decaying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verbs</strong></td>
<td>Stood, rose, spread, stretched, arched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knotted, tangled, twisted, choked, strangled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blocked, trapped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Burst, erupted, crept, wriggled, writhed, scratched, grasped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hung, swayed, tossed, danced, hopped, floated, fluttered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lit, painted, covered, cloaked, shrouded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to use this book

B. PHRASES

★ **Nouns and adjectives**: ideas on how to combine nouns and adjectives
★ **Verbs**: ideas on how to use verbs

The items in italics below and in other chapters in this book signify a change of descriptive focus. For example, from a majestic forest to a dark and dangerous one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHRASES – NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES (SUBJECT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>★ Magnificent forest of tall trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Like a crowd of vivid green umbrellas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Huge canopy of treetops like a green blanket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Emerald-green leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Fiery scarlet autumn leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Vivid green stems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Beautiful green cloaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Like fluttering green ribbons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Brightly coloured creepers like party streamers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Blazing carpet of bluebells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Clumps of snowdrops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Clusters of purple blossoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Red and orange berries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Spikes of quivering, yellow petals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Bright red, rhododendron flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Like a carpet of jewels— rubies, sapphires and opals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Glistening icicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Dew-soaked grass like a field of liquid diamonds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ <strong>Thick jungle of dense forest</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Dark, tangled maze of tunnels and secret paths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Spidery knot of trees and bushes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Thick gnarled trunks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Huge thick limbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Bleached skeletons of dead trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Roots like enormous, wooden tentacles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Like ghostly stooped figures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Like feathery shadows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Sharply pointed tips like fingernails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Carpet of decay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Rotting leaves and dead branches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Writhing carpet of buzzing, crawling insects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Blanket of fog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Eerie greenish gloom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use these ideas to think of other ways of using the words, perhaps in your own similes and metaphors.

Example:  
Brambles were thorny spiders’ webs  
Tore at her ankles like barbed spikes on a trap

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jungle, trunks, branches, thorns, brambles, thick, tangled</th>
<th>Dark, eerie, mist, shadows, shrouded, cloaked, covered</th>
<th>Trapped, strangled, grasped</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Thick jungle of dense forest</td>
<td>• Cloaked in mist</td>
<td>• Strangled the paths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Thick, gnarled trunks</td>
<td>• Like ghostly, stooped figures</td>
<td>• Impossible to find a way through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Huge, thick limbs</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Trapped in their thorny grasp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Spidery knot of trees and bushes</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Pressed in on her from all sides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Spread and twisted like some prehistoric beast</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Tore at her arms and legs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Grasped at her ankles like bony fingers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to use this book

C. SENTENCES

These model how:

★ to combine the phrases in sentences
★ to vary the type and length of sentences to make your writing more interesting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SENTENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>★ The majestic trees stood tall and proud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The trees were joined together like a crowd of vivid green umbrellas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The magnificent trees flung their branches up to the sun to frame the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deep-blue sky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ A white blanket of snowdrops danced on gusts of frosty air.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ They were welcomed by wave after wave of the gently nodding heads of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daffodils.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The ground was painted with red poppies and yellow gorse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The hedge was alive with splashes of red and orange berries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Hanging from every branch were icicles that glistened like liquid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diamonds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The branches swayed to the rhythm of the wind and their leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fluttered like graceful butterflies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The petals had been shaken off the bush and lay like a carpet of pink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confetti on the floor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ As they entered the wood, they were greeted by the bowed heads of a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blazing carpet of bluebells.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ It was impossible to move quickly through the spidery tangle of trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and bushes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The brambles and thorns tore at their arms and legs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The forest floor was a writhing carpet of buzzing, crawling insects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ An eerie greenish gloom filled the clearing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Patches of misty light shone through the gaps in the trees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The leaves glowed in the early morning light like hundreds of tiny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The bonfire blazed in the background. A thousand flickering shadows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>painted the ground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Rotting leaves hid the roots that wriggled across the ground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The forest was a dark tangled maze and it was impossible to find a way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The branches of the thick, tangled trees had spread and twisted to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>form dark, overhead tunnels and created secret paths.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The ceiling of thick branches shut out the sky and covered the path in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>darkness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The dead branches rose up and grasped at her ankles like bony fingers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The branches twisted and grated against each other like rusty hinges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Like some prehistoric beast, the huge twisted limbs of the tree guarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the entrance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Pressing in on her from all sides, it seemed that the forest was trying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to trap her in its thorny grasp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ The fog made eerie shapes and shadows as it drifted through the forest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Cloaked in mist, the trees looked like ghostly stooped figures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to use this book

CAUTION:

Do not just copy a sentence from the book, as it may not fit into the rhythm of your writing or produce the intended effect.

There are three main types of sentence, which, when used together, produce different effects and make your writing more interesting.

1. **Simple sentence**: has one **clause**. (A clause has a **subject** and a **verb**.)

   Example: The **forest** was **cloaked** in mist.

   They are useful because they can create suspense, mystery and excitement.

2. **Compound sentence**: two or more simple sentences joined by a **conjunction** (*and*, *or*, *but*, *so*, *for*, *yet*), or separated by a semi-colon (;) or colon (:).

   Too many simple sentences can make your writing sound very jerky and boring to read.

   Example: The forest was a dark tangled maze. It was impossible to find a way through. The dead branches rose up out of the mist. They grasped her ankles like bony fingers.

   It is important to join sentences together to add variety and make your writing flow.
   If we join some of these simple sentences together, the writing will flow more easily.

   Example: The forest was a dark tangled maze and it was impossible to find a way through. The dead branches rose up out of the mist, grasping at her ankles like bony fingers.

3. **Complex sentence**: has a main clause and one or more **subordinate clauses** (information added to the main clause, but does not make sense on its own).

   Example: **Rising out of the mist**, the branches grasped at her ankles like bony fingers.

   *Participial phrase is at the beginning of the sentence.*

   These are important because they can create variety and different effects and can be used to add detail or description.

   Example: The branches, **which rose out of the mist**, grasped at her ankles like bony fingers.

   *Subordinate clause is in the middle of the sentence.*
How to use this book

RESULT

‘She was trapped in a thick dark forest’ could now become:

The forest was cloaked in mist. She was trapped. She was surrounded by a thick jungle of tangled trees, gnarled branches and thorns. They had spread and twisted together. It was impossible to find a way through. She tried to pass. The thorns grasped at her ankles. They tore at her arms and legs.

or

The forest was cloaked in mist, and she was trapped and surrounded by a thick jungle of tangled trees, gnarled branches and thorns, which had spread and twisted together, so it was impossible to find a way through and as she tried to pass, the thorns grasped at her ankles and tore at her arms and legs.

or

Cloaked in mist, the trees were like ghostly, prehistoric creatures. It was impossible to find a way through. She was trapped in a thick jungle of tangled trees, gnarled branches and thorns that had spread and twisted together. Grasping at her as she tried to pass, they tore at her arms and legs, clutching her in their thorny grasp.

Which one is easiest to read and paints the best picture??

TIPS

The key to good writing is careful planning. When thinking about who, when and where, using Descriptosaurus will give you ideas and vocabulary to:

★ use your senses to paint a vivid picture of your setting – sights, sounds, smells and touch
★ describe a character using appearance, voice, movement and emotions.

REMEMBER

If you want to improve your vocabulary and your writing, there is no substitute for reading: read anything and everything – fiction or non-fiction, novels or magazines, newsletters or diaries.

Become LANGUAGE MAGPIES by keeping a writing journal and recording any interesting and exciting words or phrases you find in Descriptosaurus or anything else that you read.
PART 2: ADDITIONAL IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO USE EACH SECTION

A. WORDS

WORD CLINES (SHADES OF MEANING)

The process of students learning new words and using them in their writing requires three steps – the Three E’s.

1. **Expanding** vocabulary by collecting it from focused lessons, texts or a *Descriptosaurus*, and then connecting those words with those learned previously to provide students with a greater choice of words to choose from when constructing or revising a sentence. For example, synonyms and antonyms or changing word classes (verbs to adjectives etc.).

2. **Experimenting** with word choices.

3. **Evaluating** the effectiveness of those choices in terms of the sentence or paragraph.

This book provides an extensive range of vocabulary, and, where possible, the words are grouped according to their meaning as well as word classes. However, in addition to broadening their vocabulary, students need to be able to understand the importance of word choices and to be able to evaluate the effect and impact of those choices on their writing. Word clines are language scales that show the change in the strength of meaning of words, and by providing a visual representation of meaning are useful for clarifying the use of language. They help students to build, refine and use new vocabulary by:

- generating words with similar meanings
- discussing shades of meaning and the ideas or feelings those words invoke
- arranging them on a graduated scale according to set criteria. For example, weakest to strongest – *nasty, foul, revolting*; positive to negative – *friendly, indifferent, hostile*.

The book has been purposefully designed to easily facilitate this activity.

Models of different word cline formats are shown below. In Part 4 of the book, there are additional activities and resources.
How to use this book

B. PHRASES

In previous editions, to avoid any confusion with clauses, the phrases section of each chapter was headed:

★ phrases (nouns and adjectives)
★ phrases (verbs).

These headings have been changed in this edition to:

★ phrases – nouns and adjectives (subject)
★ predicate phrases (verbs).

This has been done for four reasons:

1. **To avoid confusion with a verb phrase.** A verb that contains more than one verb is called a verb phrase. For example:

   a) **Single verb**
   I went to South America.

   b) **Verb phrases**
   I have been visiting South America.
   I may go to South America.
   I will be going to South America.

2. **To highlight the construction of noun phrases (subjects) and predicates** so that students become familiar with the two basic components that make up a sentence and the modification tools available, such as prepositional phrases, relative (adjective) clauses and adverb clauses. This will assist students to understand that:

   ★ a subject tells the reader the **who or what the sentence is about**
   ★ a predicate tells the reader **what the subject is or does.**

To develop a secure understanding of sentence construction, to understand (and avoid) run-ons and unintentional sentence fragments (minor sentences), it is essential that students understand the component parts of a sentence – words, phrases and clauses. To do this, knowledge of how a sentence is divided into subject and predicate is essential.
This exercise will also then support students whilst proofreading their own texts and enable them to spot run-on sentences and unintentional sentence fragments (minor sentences).

**Exercise:**

Collect a series of **noun phrases** and **predicate phrases** and experiment with different combinations.

**Example:**

- The magnificent forest of tall trees/ spread out above him.
- The magnificent forest of tall trees/ stretched as far as the eye could see.
- The magnificent forest of tall trees/ framed the deep-blue sky.
- Like a green blanket, the huge canopy of treetops/ framed the deep-blue sky.

3. **To provide an easily accessible resource that forms a foundation for constructing sentences** and which encourages students to experiment with different combinations to create a variety of simple sentences before advancing to combining these series of sentences into compound and complex sentences.

**Exercise:**

Use the noun phrases and predicate phrases and experiment with combining them into a compound sentence.

**Example:**

- The magnificent forest of tall trees/ spread out above him like a crowd of vivid green umbrellas, and it stretched as far as the eye could see.

4. **To provide a wealth of phrases and descriptions to enable students to experiment with the construction and use of modification tools** (with clearly identified levels of progression) to create a desired rhythm and movement in the writing, for example, (a) expanding the description using a relative clause or (b) adding a series of participial phrases or (c) modifying the whole sentence using an adverb clause.

**Exercise 1: Combining description using a relative clause**

Use one of the phrases, construct a relative clause and embed it into the sentence.

For example: …, (which) spread out above him like a crowd of vivid green umbrellas, …

**The magnificent forest of tall trees, which spread out above him like a crowd of vivid green umbrellas, stretched as far as the eye could see.**

**Exercise 2: Adding movement using participial phrases**

Use the predicate phrases to construct a series of present participial phrases and experiment with positioning them at the beginning or end of a sentence. For example:
How to use this book

★ spread out above him – spreading out above him
★ stretched as far as the eye could see – stretching as far as the eye could see.

Example:

Spreading out above him like a crowd of vivid green umbrellas, stretching as far as the eye could see / the magnificent forest of towering trees framed the deep-blue sky.

The magnificent forest of towering trees framed the deep-blue sky, spreading out about him like a crowd of vivid green umbrellas.

The magnificent forest of towering trees framed the deep-blue sky, spreading out above him like a crowd of vivid green umbrellas and stretching as far as the eye could see.

When exploring or experimenting with sentence structure, order and modifications, it is always important that students are provided with opportunities to discuss the effectiveness of those combinations and to examine alternatives, including evaluating whether a series of short, single-clause sentences would be more effective in the context of a particular text. This will also encourage students to pay greater attention to original and effective structures in their own or class reading.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

These are just some ideas of how Descriptosaurus can be used to develop knowledge and use of modification tools. In Part 4, there are a series of tables showing the progression in subject, predicate and sentence constructions and highlighting the modification tools that are available as students become more proficient and confident with the basics of sentence construction. Additional exercises are included in the Descriptosaurus Grammar Companion.

C. SENTENCES:

CHUNKING

This process replicates the one used when reading to comprehend a sentence: breaking it down into chunks of meaning. It helps students become aware that authors compose their sentences one ‘chunk’ (meaningful sentence part) at a time. This is important as students learn to imitate model sentences and to use them in their own writing. Comprehensive resources have been included in Part 4 of this book, which is a step-by-step guide to using this method to develop knowledge of the component parts of a sentence. Knowledge is built up in the context of these exercises by discussing:

For example: Which of the sentences below has been divided into meaningful chunks: i or ii?

1. The massive waves crashed mercilessly onto the side of the boat.
   i. The massive waves crashed mercilessly onto the side of the boat.
   ii. The massive waves/ crashed/ mercilessly/ onto the side of the boat.
   a. What is the subject of the sentence? the massive waves
   b. What did they do? crashed
   c. How did they do it? relentlessly
   d. Where did they crash? onto the side of the boat.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The massive waves</th>
<th>What does this tell us?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>crashed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relentlessly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onto the side of the boat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. What is the subject of the sentence? the massive waves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. What did they do?</td>
<td>crashed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. How did they do it?</td>
<td>relentlessly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Where did they crash?</td>
<td>onto the side of the boat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
why students have divided up the sentence in the way they have
★ what information each sentence chunk tells the reader.

**TEACHING GRAMMAR IN CONTEXT**

Apart from overwhelming evidence that teaching traditional grammar by labelling, identifying and parsing sentences does not transfer to students’ own writing, there is also extensive research to conclude that there are three effective ways of facilitating students’ understanding and application of grammar in terms of sentence construction, modification and revision:

A. Sentence imitation
B. Sentence combining
C. Sentence expansion

Whilst each method should be modelled and practised separately, the processes are complementary and should be used together to consolidate knowledge of the ‘grammar tools’ available as well as developing automaticity in sentence construction. They also provide an essential foundation for understanding how to evaluate and revise a text. Part 4 of this book and the *Descriptosaurus Grammar Companion* include guidelines, resources and exercises for each of these processes.
Part 1
Settings
1

Woods, forests, jungles and rainforests

WORDS

Nouns
- Forest, wood, woodland, jungle, rainforest
- Sight, scene, view, panorama
- Layers, emergent, canopy, understory, forest floor
- Sky, ceiling, roof, arch, umbrella, blanket, cloak, cape
- Floor, ground, undergrowth, carpet, mat, rug
- Route, path, track, trail, tunnels
- Web, maze, labyrinth
- Swamp, bog
- Trees, treetops, trunks, bark, branches, twigs, roots, logs
- Pine, oak, willow, chestnut, yew
- Rubber, banana, cacao
- Stems, leaves, buds, blossoms, flowers, petals, berries, fruit
- Vines, creepers
- Ivy, brambles, thorns, nettles, moss, lichen, fungus
- Bluebells, snowdrops, daffodils, buttercups, poppies, rhododendrons, gorse, thistles,
- Orchids, lilies, giant water lilies, corpse flowers
- Pinecones, acorns, horse chestnuts, conkers
- Brazil nuts, pecans
- Ferns, reeds, rushes
- Groups, clusters, clumps, patches
- Sun, sunlight, rays, shafts, spears, arrows
- Heat, humidity, haze
- Mist, fog, shadows, gloom, darkness

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Landscapes: woods, forests, jungles and rainforests

Dew, rain, downpour, torrent
Cold, frost, icicles
Wind, breeze, gale
Sounds, chirp, tweet, cheep, hum, whistle, hoot, cry, howl, shriek, screech
Whisper, creak, rattle, rustle, crunch, snap, crack, groan, thud

Adjectives
Beautiful, majestic, stunning, spectacular, magnificent, breath-taking
Tall, huge, vast, towering, massive, enormous
Colourful, brightly coloured, rainbow-coloured
Brown, yellow, green, lime, emerald, pink, red, scarlet, crimson, fiery, orange, bronze,
Bright, vivid, blazing, dazzling
Thick, deep, dense, tangled, knotted, impenetrable
Thin, twiggy, spidery
Smooth, soft, rubbery, silky, satiny, velvety, hairy, feathery
Rough, sharp, thorny, spiky, barbed, gnarled, twisted, bent
Dead, rotting, decaying, shrivelled, withered
Hot, stifling, steamy
Cold, chilly, icy
Wet, damp, dripping, sodden
Dry, baked, hard, cracked
Sunny, light, bright
Misty, foggy, hazy
Dark, black, gloomy, shadowy
Spooky, ghostly, creepy, eerie, mysterious, sinister, menacing, dangerous, perilous
Silent, quiet, still, calm, peaceful
Noisy, loud, echoing

Verbs
Stood, rose, arched, stretched, spread, surrounded, circled
Grew, sprouted, bloomed, blossomed
Crept, slid, snaked, wriggled, writhed, looped, curved, bent, burst, erupted
Hung, dangled, swayed, tossed, nodded, waved, floated, fluttered, flapped, danced, hopped
Knotted, tangled, twisted, choked, strangled
Blocked, obstructed, trapped
Grasped, tore, scratched
Led, weaved, wound, meandered, zigzagged
Lit, painted, streaked, washed, coated, covered
Hid, cloaked, veiled, shrouded
Sounded, rang, boomed, echoed
Whistled, whined, murmured, hooted, shrieked
Smelt, wafted, drifted, floated
**PHRASES – NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES (SUBJECT)**

- Beautiful sunny wood
- Magnificent forest of towering trees
- Majestic trees with thick column-like trunks
- Trunks like melting candle wax
- Canopy like a crowd of vivid-green umbrellas
- Huge canopy like a vivid-green blanket over the forest
- Spectacular leafy arch over the trail
- Emerald-green leaves the size of dinner plates
- Waxy green leaves, enormous and bowl-shaped
- Enormous, rubbery, bowl-shaped leaves
- Fiery scarlet autumn leaves
- Layers of crisp red and golden leaves beneath her feet
- Beautiful green cloaks
- Autumn cape of fiery scarlet and golden leaves
- Like fluttering lime-green ribbons
- Vivid lime-green stems
- Brightly coloured creepers like party streamers
- Thick vines like emerald-green ropes
- As thick as a human body
- Brightly coloured wildflowers
- Blazing carpet of bluebells
- Swaying, scented, knee-high tide of bluebells
- Gently nodding heads of yellow daffodils
- Clumps of pale-ivory snowdrops like dainty drooping bells
- Clusters of huge purple blossoms
- Spikes of quivering yellow petals
- Bright-red rhododendron flowers
- Like a jewelled carpet of rubies, sapphires and opals
- White bell-shaped flowers like tiny shimmering lamps
- Patches of yellow buttercups, purple thistles and blood-red poppies
- Long, hairy, tube-like catkins
- Hairy catkins, long and tube-like
- Blazing-yellow gorse
- Vivid-green foliage and brightly coloured blossoms
- Dazzling display of bright yellow, red, pink and purple blossoms
- Stunning orchids in many different colours: blues, reds, pinks and yellows
- Spectacular purple and blue flowers
- Bright colourful cloaks of purples and reds, blues and yellows
- Vivid velvety blossoms
- Orange and yellow trailing blossoms
- Like a jewelled tapestry
Stunning floral display
- Red corpse flowers the size of dinner plates
- Smooth and rubbery like a mushroom
- Bright-yellow lichen like gold dust
- Brightly coloured yellow and scarlet fungi
- Black blister-like fungus like swollen dead fingers
- Crimson blaze of red holly berries
- Plump juicy berries
- Chestnuts in their spiky green coats
- Bunches of bananas like a multi-layered cone
- Clusters of oval yellow fruits
- Narrow winding trail through a tangle of thorny brambles
- Gloomy tangled track
- Tangled thicket
- Thick curtains of tangled foliage on either side of the trail
- Swishing curtain of hairy moss like a straggly beard
- Curtain of moss like long strands of green hair
- Dry rutted path
- Swampy track of squelching rotten leaves
- Decaying carpet of rotting leaves and dead branches
- Bleached branches like bony fingers
- Writhing carpet of buzzing, crawling insects
- Glistening icicles
- Sparkling frost
- Crisp white carpet
- Tiny droplets of dew
- Dew-soaked grass like a field of liquid crystals
- Thick jungle of dense forest
- Dark tangled maze of tunnels and secret paths
- Thick gnarled trunks
- Huge thick limbs
- Crooked silver limbs
- Spear-like branches with tips like fingernails
- Bleached skeletons of dead trees
- Like ghostly stooped figures in the misty light
- Roots like enormous wooden tentacles
- Like feathery shadows
- Brilliant sunshine
- Shafts of blazing sunlight
- Bright beams of sunlight
- Tunnel of hazy green sunshine
- Eerie greenish glow across the forest
- Hot steamy cloud like a sauna
- Patches of misty light
Landscapes: woods, forests, jungles and rainforests

- Blanket of fog
- Warm breeze
- Gusts of icy wind
- Whistling gale
- Cracks and crunches, rattles and rustles in the undergrowth
- Like rusty hinges
- Whoops and whistles
- Whirring, whining insects
- Droning bees and whining mosquitoes
- Chattering parakeets, screeching howler monkeys
- Screech of a hunting owl
- Chirrups and tweets, whistles and shrieks
- Sweet scent of succulent mangoes
- Rotting stench of the corpse flowers

**Predicate Phrases (Verbs)**

- Spread out above him
- Stretched as far as the eye could see
- Entered a magical wood of enormous ancient trees
- Loomed ahead of them
- Rose above her head
- Soared towards the sky
- Framed the deep-blue sky
- Joined together like a leafy green blanket
- Spread and twisted together like a prehistoric beast
- Swayed to the rhythm of the wind
- Arched in the wind
- Danced on gusts of frosty air
- Tossed their branches
- Flung their leaves up to the sky
- Waved like hundreds of tiny hands
- Drooped from the high branches
- Hung like swaying feathers between the branches
- Trailed their leaves on the ground
- Floated to the ground
- Looped around the trunks
- Twisted up and around the trunks
- Reached across the path
- Was alive with splashes of red and orange berries
- Covered in butterflies with neon green and yellow wings
- Stretched like a jewelled carpet
- Lay like a carpet of confetti
- Cloaked with purple heather
- Dotted with red poppies
Covered the vine with stunning blossoms
Surrounded by velvety purple flowers
Splashed with clumps of yellow gorse
Nestled in the leaves
Hung in masses from vivid-green stems
Poked out of the undergrowth
Covered in a fiery autumn cloak
Coated the trunk in a golden dust
Choked the twisted tree
Knotted amongst the trees and branches
Formed a gloomy tunnel
Created secret paths
Hid the ancient track
Littered the ground
Wriggled across the forest floor
Strangled the paths
Spread a web of wooden tentacles across the ground
Concealed many dangers
Wound through the forest
Pressed in on them on all sides
Surrounded them
Blocked the way forward
Trapped them in its thorny barriers
Tore at their arms and legs
Grasped at her ankles like bony fingers
Bathed in sunlight
Filled the forest
Drenched the forest in an amber glow
Shimmered on the leaves
Covered the path in flickering shadows
Shrouded in mist
Cloaked in a black blanket
Spread its frosty cloak over the forest
Dripped with rain
Shrouded in a hot steamy cloud
Covered in a smoky mist
Drifted through the wood
Rustled in the breeze
Flapped in the wind
Whistled in the trees
Crackled in the canopy
Echoed through the woods
Exploded with sound
Could be heard miles away
A magnificent forest of towering trees, with thick column-like trunks, rose above his head.

In the canopy, the tops of the trees were joined together like a crowd of vivid-green umbrellas.

The canopy formed a spectacular leafy arch over the trails.

The trees flung their branches up to the sun to frame the deep-blue sky.

The trees had trunks like melting candle wax.

The spear-like branches had tips like fingernails.

The forest floor (a layer of crisp red and golden leaves) crunched under her feet.

An autumn cape of fiery scarlet and golden leaves covered the trees.

The forest had a colourful cloak of purples and reds, blues and yellows.

A curtain of moss, which was like long strands of green hair, tumbled from the branches.

Thick vines like emerald-green ropes curled in huge loops around the trunks.

As thick as a human body, the wooded vines looped around the trees, and climbed towards the canopy to search for light and moisture.

Rich and vivid, the velvety blossoms painted the forest with splashes of dazzling colour.

Like a jewelled tapestry, huge clusters of blossoms painted the forest in a rainbow of vivid colours.

Spectacular purple and blue flowers hung in dazzling masses from vivid-green stems.

Orange and yellow trailing blossoms covered the lime-green vine in a stunning floral display.

The bush was ablaze with crimson holly berries.

Clumps of plump glossy blackberries glistened on the bramble bushes.

Colourful clusters of ripe fruit – mangoes and papayas, bananas and passion fruit – dangled from the branches.

Hanging beneath huge waxy green leaves, the bunches of bananas were like a multi-layered cone.

Groups of chestnuts, which were wrapped in their spiky green coats, nestled among the leaves.

A white blanket of snowdrops danced on the gusts of frosty air.

Wave after wave of the gently nodding heads of yellow daffodils greeted them.

Red poppies and yellow gorse painted the ground.

The hedge was alive with splashes of red and orange berries.

The branches swayed to the rhythm of the wind.

During the storm, the petals had been shaken off the bush and now lay like a carpet of pink confetti on the floor.

When they entered the wood, they were greeted by the bowed heads of a blazing carpet of bluebells.
Landscapes: woods, forests, jungles and rainforests

They waded through a blazing carpet of bluebells, a swaying, knee-high tide whose delicate scent lingered in the air.

Either side of the path, pale ivory snowdrops like dainty drooping bells covered the clearing in a rippling white carpet.

A carpet of gorse bathed the clearing in a blaze of bright yellow and filled the air with the scent of coconut.

*Shafts of brilliant sunshine bathed the forest in an amber glow.*

Beams of bright sunlight, which pierced the canopy, tumbled down the tree trunks, slid across the vines and dappled the ground with shafts of dazzling light.

Glistening icicles hung from every branch.

Every morning, dewdrops like diamond earrings dangled from the branches and leaves.

Clouds of hot steam shrouded the forest.

*Before winter had spread its icy cloak over the forest, clusters of purple and pink blossoms had covered the bushes.*

Winter had stolen the leaves from the trees and coated the bare branches and the undergrowth in an icy frost.

The jungle was a dark tangled maze, and it was impossible to find a way through.

The jungle was a dark tangled maze; it was impossible to find a way through.

To his left, the forest was an endless labyrinth of huge trees under a thick canopy that covered the path in flickering shadows.

A dark forest, dense and impenetrable, loomed ahead of them.

They had found a path, but their progress through the tangled thicket was slow.

It was impossible to move quickly through the spidery tangle of brambles and thorns which tore at their arms and legs.

The enormous, twisted branches had spread and stretched over the forest to form dark overhead tunnels and had hidden the secret ancient tracks.

The bleached branches, which rose up out of the undergrowth, grasped at her ankles like bony fingers.

He did not see the roots that wriggled across the ground because they were hidden by layers of rotting leaves.

Pockets of corpse flowers, which were bright-red blooms the size of dinner plates, emitted a rancid reek of rotting flesh.

Like swollen dead fingers, the black fungus poked out of the undergrowth.

The forest was a writhing carpet of buzzing, crawling insects.

They headed deeper into the wood, but within a few metres a tangled spider’s web of thorns and brambles blocked the path.

The track, which was dotted with the bleached skeletons of fallen trees and strips of swampy ground, seemed to get narrower with every step.

A boggy path of rotten leaves twisted through the forest.

Their path through the dense undergrowth wound in and out: around the tangled, thorny barriers, over the trunks of fallen trees, and through the gloomy vault formed by the huge oak trees.
The ceiling of thick branches shut out the sky and covered the path in darkness.

Although it was the middle of the day, the ceiling of thick branches shut out the light.

Dusk shrouded the trees and cast long-fingered shadows over the ground.

Like a crooked arch, the ceiling of thick tangled branches and vines covered the path in shadows.

Patches of misty light shone through the gaps in the trees.

In the early morning light, the leaves glowed like hundreds of tiny hands.

Shafts of moonlight, which filtered down through the canopy, painted the forest in a hazy shade of silver.

As it drifted through the forest, the fog filled the clearing with a greenish gloom which created eerie shapes and shadows.

Cloaked in mist, the trees looked like ghostly stooped figures.

Tendrils of mist crept over the ground; their smoky tentacles curled around the trees and transformed them into rows of ghostly silhouettes.

She would never be able to find the path in the dark, so she waited until dawn.

While he had stumbled through the jungle, the sun had fallen like a sinking stone, and a black curtain had been drawn across the sky.

Although the storm had gone, the rain still dripped from the leaves in a steady musical rhythm – drip, plop, plop, drip.

The screech of a hunting owl echoed through the woods.

The loud echoing call of the howler monkeys could be heard from miles away.

The forest was alive with the sound of cracks and crunches, rattles and rustles, whoops and whistles.

The sound of whirring, whining insects filled the wood.

The rainforest was bursting with sound: bees droning, mosquitoes whining, parakeets chattering and howler monkeys screeching.

The branches twisted and grated against each other like rusty hinges.

As the wind picked up, it whistled through the branches and crackled in the canopy.

If he had stopped and listened, he would have heard the rustle in the undergrowth – a warning of an invisible predator somewhere close by.