

CURRICULUM MADE IN FALL:

Week 1:

- Intros
- Icebreaker (check doc)
- Fun writing exercise, everyone shares something they wrote
 - Ex: word they love, story/poem including the word
- choose an object to describe that you love

Week 2:

- show an example piece of writing
- discuss a piece of writing
 - using five senses in writing
 - Elements of essay: intro, body, conclusion (review)
- Bring that object to class

Week 3:

- Discuss: why chose that object/what it means to you, tell me a story
- Describe the object
 - Show them example
 - Notebook work (separate page into 5 different parts: see, taste, smell, feel, hear)
- Short outlines (on their computers, share with me?)
 - Incorporate story about object
- Show example essay again
- Begin writing

Week 4:

- Write, 20 minutes
- Go over it at the end, one thing they like and one thing they don't (say this better)

Week 5: editing a little bit, finish

IN-DEPTH CURRICULUM I MADE WHILE TEACHING:

WEEK 1

4:15-4:20	Collect emails
4:20-4:25	Ice Breaker Turn On/Off Video Ask 3-4 questions
4:25-4:30	Play video introducing Amanda Gorman

4:30-4:36	Play Amanda Gorman's poem, " The Hill We Climb. "
4:36-4:50	<p>Break out groups</p> <p>How did the poem make you feel? Share a vibe or feeling?</p> <p>What is your favorite line? Why?</p>
4:50-4:55	<p>Introduce writing prompt.</p> <p>What hill do you — or we — climb?</p> <p>Ask girls to share some examples.</p> <p>I also saw this great writing prompt last night:</p> <p>“When day comes we step out of the shade, alfame and unafraid The new dawn blooms as we free it For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it If only we're brave enough to be it.”</p> <p>When your light shines brightest, what are you brave enough to see and what are you brave enough to be?</p>
4:55-5:10	<p>Writing time.</p> <p>Answer prompt. Write at least 8 sentences (unless you do a poem or something of some</p>

	sort).
5:10-5:15	Share some writing. Collect emails.

WEEK 2

4:15-4:25	Sharing from last class
4:25-4:40	Ice Breaker/Writing Exercise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Everyone shares favorite color -> lead into the writing exercise - Writing Exercise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write down as many things as you can think that are the same color as your favorite color <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (ex: fav color brown, write down as many things you can think of that are brown) - Choose something on that list, anything (go around and say it) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Come up with as many synonyms you can to describe that thing (5 senses)
4:40-4:50	Show/Explain Handout, read examples, explain project
4:50-5:10	Writing Time
5:15	Possibly some sharing

WEEK 3

4:15-4:20	Arriving time, talk ab today's schedule
4:25-4:45	All of us say what we're writing about (the object) - SHARE why as well <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show them handout again - Lists for each senses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I DO: kashmir one - WE DO: rainy day

	- YOU DO: with their own object
4:50-5:10	List making
5:00-5:15	Come back together, let people share

WEEK 4

4:15-4:25	Look at list, make it more specific, give them time to
4:30-4:45	Create an essay with them (from the rainy day in the summer example)
4:50-5:05	Their own writing time, help them (creep on their documents while they're writing)
5:10-5:15	Talk about next week

WEEK 5

4:15-4:20	Talk ab today's schedule
4:25-4:35	Show them what I wrote based off the list they made
4:40-4:50	Writing time (creep on their documents while they're writing)
4:55-5:10	Sharing time
5:15	goodbye :'(

The Hill We Climb
By Amanda Gorman

**When day comes we step out of the shade,
aflame and unafraid**

**The new dawn blooms as we free it
For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it
If only we're brave enough to be it**

Writing Prompt:

What hill do you — or we — climb?

The Hill We Climb
By Amanda Gorman

When day comes we ask ourselves,
where can we find light in this never-ending shade?
The loss we carry,
a sea we must wade
We've braved the belly of the beast
We've learned that quiet isn't always peace
And the norms and notions
of what just is
Isn't always just-ice
And yet the dawn is ours
before we knew it
Somehow we do it
Somehow we've weathered and witnessed
a nation that isn't broken
but simply unfinished

We the successors of a country and a time
Where a skinny Black girl
descended from slaves and raised by a single mother
can dream of becoming president
only to find herself reciting for one
And yes we are far from polished
far from pristine
but that doesn't mean we are
striving to form a union that is perfect
We are striving to forge a union with purpose
To compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters and
conditions of man
And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us
but what stands before us
We close the divide because we know, to put our future first,
we must first put our differences aside
We lay down our arms
so we can reach out our arms
to one another
We seek harm to none and harmony for all
Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true:
That even as we grieved, we grew
That even as we hurt, we hoped
That even as we tired, we tried
That we'll forever be tied together, victorious
Not because we will never again know defeat
but because we will never again sow division

Scripture tells us to envision
that everyone shall sit under their own vine and fig tree
And no one shall make them afraid
If we're to live up to our own time
Then victory won't lie in the blade
But in all the bridges we've made
That is the promise to glade
The hill we climb
If only we dare
It's because being American is more than a pride we inherit,
it's the past we step into
and how we repair it
We've seen a force that would shatter our nation
rather than share it
Would destroy our country if it meant delaying democracy
And this effort very nearly succeeded
But while democracy can be periodically delayed
it can never be permanently defeated
In this truth
in this faith we trust
For while we have our eyes on the future
history has its eyes on us
This is the era of just redemption
We feared at its inception
We did not feel prepared to be the heirs
of such a terrifying hour
but within it we found the power

to author a new chapter
To offer hope and laughter to ourselves
So while once we asked,
how could we possibly prevail over catastrophe?
Now we assert
How could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?
We will not march back to what was
but move to what shall be
A country that is bruised but whole,
benevolent but bold,
fierce and free
We will not be turned around
or interrupted by intimidation
because we know our inaction and inertia
will be the inheritance of the next generation
Our blunders become their burdens
But one thing is certain:
If we merge mercy with might,
and might with right,
then love becomes our legacy
and change our children's birthright
So let us leave behind a country
better than the one we were left with
Every breath from my bronze-pounded chest,
we will raise this wounded world into a wondrous one
We will rise from the gold-limbed hills of the west,
we will rise from the windswept northeast

where our forefathers first realized revolution

We will rise from the lake-rimmed cities of the midwestern states,

we will rise from the sunbaked south

We will rebuild, reconcile and recover

and every known nook of our nation and

every corner called our country,

our people diverse and beautiful will emerge,

battered and beautiful

When day comes we step out of the shade,

aflame and unafraid

The new dawn blooms as we free it

For there is always light,

if only we're brave enough to see it

If only we're brave enough to be it

Write after reading and just capture your vibe or feeling from the poem or the article about Gorman.

Introduction to the Poet

Do you know who Amanda Gorman is?

Video on Gorman:

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/poet-tapped-for-inauguration-to-spread-a-message-of-unity>

Amanda Gorman:

When Amanda Gorman was writing her inaugural poem, “The Hill We Climb,” she faced a challenge unlike any of her predecessors. Gorman set out to craft a poem that was both hopeful and realistic, one that reflected the political divisions that have fractured the country, but also the promise of greater unity. She finished writing the poem just after rioters stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6.

At 22, Gorman, who lives in Los Angeles, is the youngest inaugural poet in U.S. history. She was brought to the Inaugural Committee’s attention by first lady [Jill Biden](#), who saw her

recite a poem at the Library of Congress, and was struck by her performance and her bold yellow dress (Gorman wore a bright yellow blazer at the inauguration).

To prepare for her appearance, Gorman, who has a speech impediment, read the poem aloud over and over, “practicing it and trying to let it be known in my mouth, but not feel robotic,” she said in an interview. Early reviews of her performance were glowing: on CNN, she was praised for summing “up with emotion and beautiful eloquence the idea of what this country came close to losing.”

ICEBREAKERS/Writing EXERCISE HANDOUT:

Week 2:

- What is your favorite color?
- Each go around and answer.
- Choose an item and describe it with the five senses.

Actual week 2:

- Name, grade, what do you know about writing? Sort of get an idea of where they're all at
- favorite color -> lead into the writing exercise
- Writing Exercise:
 - Write down as many things as you can think that are the same color as your favorite color
 - (ex: fav color brown, write down as many things you can think of that are brown)
 - Choose something on that list, anything (go around and say it)
 - Come up with as many synonyms you can to describe that thing

Week 2:

- Tell us the thing you love/want to write about

(next page)

HANDOUT PROVIDED TO STUDENTS:

Five Senses:

- SEE

- Object I want to describe: Kashmiri rug
- What it means to you: grandfather gave it to me, reminds me of my heritage and home in Kashmir
- Descriptions:
 - colorful, floral, roses everywhere connected by stems, embroidery

- HEAR

- What I want to describe: Lover by Taylor Swift
- What it means to you: one of my favorite songs
- Descriptions:
 - drums, guitar strings plucking, chorus - higher than first and second verses, chorus has some piano as well

- TOUCH

- Object I want to describe: stuffed animal sheep
- What it means to you: been with me since childhood, was originally my sister's
- Descriptions:
 - off white, and dirty, not fully stuffed so it flops over and looks empty
 - The body and head have fabric that sticks out and dust collects all over it.
 - pieces of my hair stick to it
 - the legs, feet, and face are a different, more smooth material, nothing sticks to those

- TASTE

- Object I want to describe: coffee ice cream (dark roast coffee) from Mitchell's
- What it means to you: favorite flavor
- Descriptions:
 - Has a subtle coffee flavor, it is more sugary than coffee-like
 - The taste isn't alarming or awakening in any way
 - cold at first, but warms up in seconds inside my mouth

- SMELL

- Object I want to describe: my swing set after it rains
- What it means to you: it's a very old swing set, I've had since I was eight. My sister and I used to play there all the time and for a while we stopped, but began again in quarantine. After it rains, it has a distinct smell that reminds me of a lot of good times
- Descriptions:
 - External scent of mud and grass, sort of cleaner

- earthy
- The metal chains holding up the swings contrasts this earthy smell
- It kind of smells like how blood tastes
 - metallic and unappealing

SOMETIMES you can't use all five senses, but it's important to use as many as you can to give the best possible description to the reader! In the first example, I used touch, smell, and seeing (I could not taste or hear my object). In the next example, the author uses all the senses in the thunderstorm. Just try to use as many as you can.

Example Essay - combining all 5 senses & adding a personal touch

The sunset feels hot on my forehead. Clouds drip with the sun's golden paint, as it pours over the entire sky. Silhouettes of jagged mountains and pine trees puncture the canvas as I listen to the low hum of my grandfather's Kashmiri, the crickets' calls, the water lapping against menacing rocks. The sun sinks behind the dark mountains into an ocean of faded coral skies. I let its lingering rays blur my vision, as I breathe in Kashmir's dusty air. I bask in the Himalayan sunset, overcome by my unwavering love for my home and its natural beauties.

Even though the past ten years have turned my homeland into a battleground between India and Pakistan, subtle beauties continue to peek through the chaos of armed guards, pollution, and barbed wire. The tumultuous social climate has changed my home on the outside, but within, at its core, Kashmir stays radiant. Drives through the Himalayas remain humbling, *shikara* rides on Dal Lake are ever tranquil, and, most of all, the people continue to sing, grateful for what they have, treasuring the brief, precious moments because they are so fleeting. Kashmir is still gorgeous, a hidden gem glittering despite its turmoil.

It has been a really long time since I experienced a feeling like this one, a sense of complete and utter gratification. I, like most people, have spent the majority of my life wishing I were somewhere else, hoping one day everything would fall into place. I've constantly felt like everything I did wasn't enough, that my life didn't resemble what I saw portrayed in books or movies. I never understood why my experiences felt so plain compared to my friends' who were always traveling or at parties. It upset me that I was stuck in a constant cycle of schoolwork and classes that felt mundane and meaningless. I never realized, until staring at the Himalayan sunset, fiery and glowing, that beauty is omnipresent, hiding amongst the rubble and ruin of Kashmir, disguised in the ordinary cycles of my everyday life.

More Example Descriptive Essays:

I watched a thunderstorm, far out over the sea. It began quietly, and with nothing visible except tall dark clouds and a rolling tide. There was just a soft murmur of thunder as I watched the horizon from my balcony. Over the next few minutes, the clouds closed and reflected

lightning set the rippling ocean aglow. The thunderheads had covered up the sun, shadowing the vista. It was peaceful for a long time.

I was looking up when the first clear thunderbolt struck. It blazed against the sky and sea; I could see its shape in perfect reverse colors when I blinked. More followed. The thunder rumbled and stuttered as if it could hardly keep up. There were openings in the cloud now, as if the sky were torn, and spots of brilliant blue shone above the shadowed sea.

I looked down then, watching the waves. Every bolt was answered by a moment of spreading light on the surface. The waves were getting rough, rising high and crashing hard enough that I could hear them.

Then came the rain. It came all at once and in sheets, soaking the sand, filling the sea. It was so dense I could only see the lightning as flashes of light. It came down so hard the thunder was drowned. Everything was rhythmic light and shadow, noise and silence, blending into a single experience of all five senses.

In an instant it stopped. The storm broke. The clouds came apart like curtains. The rain still fell, but softly now. It was as if there had never been a storm at all, except for a single signature. A rainbow, almost violently bright, spread above and across the water. I could see the horizon again.

<https://examples.yourdictionary.com/descriptive-essay-examples.html>

EXAMPLE AS I WORKED WITH THE STUDENTS:

A Hill I Climbed -

I had an image in my head: girls in a classroom, me standing in front of them, getting to pour my heart out about the things I love, hearing about what others loved. Teaching them that what they have to say is meaningful and beautiful and deserving of praise. And then March 2020 happened, and it felt like that image had been ripped apart. I didn't think it would've been possible. But I also didn't know that I'd find a new way to hear others' voices. I spoke with girls online over the summer, just having conversations. It wasn't in person. I wasn't standing in front of them and teaching. But I was still listening. I was still in the same space as them, even if it wasn't the one I was expecting. I realized that, yes, the old dream I had imagined so innocently was no longer a possibility. But I slowly began to recognize a new dream, where I'd get to share stories with others. It would have to be online, and things would undeniably be harder. But still, this dream was alive and new and most importantly, *possible*. I'd climbed a hill that was so large and unexpected. And if I could overcome such a big obstacle, shouldn't I be able to keep going no matter what online teaching brings me? I'm grateful for the challenges I encountered. They showed me I am capable of coming out on the other side, and that I can climb hills when I least expect it.