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| CATEGORY | **88-100** | **78-87** | **65-77** | **0-64** |
| **Lead graf(s)** | Lead catches reader attention, immediately begins to paint a picture with carefully chosen fig. lang. | Lead begins with fig. lang., but is somewhat awkward or stilted. | Lead uses fig. lang. that is incongruous to scene being described or is weakly connected. | Lead fails to catch reader attention or lacks fig. lang. |
| **Sights** | Sights are accurately and richly described so reader can feel s/he is there. Imagery is lively and appropriate. | Sights are mostly described, but some are left to imagination. Imagery applies to much of description. | Only some sights are described, leaving much to the imagination. Imagery is limited to adjectives-other fig. lang. is left out. | Sights are "told" not "shown," using only adjectives and adverbs to paint picture. Fig. lang. is not used. |
| **Sounds** | Sounds come to life through use of descriptive passages that use clear imagery and fig. lang. | Some sounds are clearly described using fig. lang., but others are ignored. | A few sounds are described, but fig. lang. is weak or inaccurate. | Sounds are not described, or described poorly, so reader cannot imagine them. |
| **Smells/Tastes** | Smells/tastes come to life through use of descriptive passages that use clear imagery and fig. lang. | Some smells/tastes are clearly described using fig. lang., but others are ignored. | A few smells/tastes are described, but fig. lang. is weak or inaccurate. | Smells/tastes are not described, or described poorly, so reader cannot imagine them. |
| **Feelings/Tactile sense** | Feelings/tactile sensations come to life through use of descriptive passages that use clear imagery and fig. lang. | Some feelings/tactile sensations are clearly described using fig. lang., but others are ignored. | A few feelings/tactile sensations are described, but fig. lang. is weak or inaccurate. | Feelings/tactile sensations are not described, or described poorly, so reader cannot imagine them. |
| **Dialogue** | If people are interacting, snatches of dialogue are used, formatted correctly, and provide insight into conversations. | People are interacting, snatches of conversations are used, but formatted incorrectly. | Instead of using dialogue, words are summarized by writer. | Although there were people in the piece, every one of them was silent in a venue that would normally have dialogue. (unrealistic) |
| **Sentence structure** | Compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences are cleverly mixed with strong simple sentences to add effect and musicality. | Compound, complex, compound-complex, and simple sentences are used, but the rhythm seems awkward. | Compound, complex, compound-complex, and simple sentences are used, but some sentences seem to run on, or there's a staccato effect to the simple sentences that is off-putting. | Sentence structure seems redundant and ineffective. |
| **Flow** | Piece flows smoothly from one aspect to the next with strong transitional sentences to take the reader on a 360-degree trip around the place. | Transitions help move the reader through piece, but a few are awkward. | Transitions are redundant or missing in some places. | Transitions are awkward and either wordy or simplistic, detracting from the writing. |
| **Literary / Rhetorical Devices** | Writer has included devices that add to the effectiveness of the writing and create a strong piece. | Writer has included devices, some of which are inappropriately used or awkward. | Writer has attempted to use device, but the effect is somewhat jarring. | Writer has not attempted to use any additional literary/rhetorical devices. |
| **Closing graf** | Piece ends effectively, using some kind of structural element or literary device to connect back to lead. | Piece ends well, but lacks clear (rhetorical/literary) connection to lead graf. | Piece ends clearly, but lacks connection to lead and seems to wind down slowly and ineffectively. | Ending is awkward- as if piece should have been longer, but stopped without warning. |
| **Style/Spelling/Grammar** | Piece is cleanly edited, written at appropriate grade level, care is evident. | Piece has been edited, perhaps another read-through could have caught minor errors. Grade level is appropriate. | Piece may have been through spell check, but editing for length, word choice, etc. are lacking. Grade level is too high/low. | Piece does not appear to have been edited for quality purposes |