**ESSENTIALS FOR VIVID DESCRIPTIVE WRITING**

**Details, Details, Details!**

1. Decide on pattern choice best for a specific scene

**Block** - paragraph(s) with straight narrative description; usually introducing MC

(Main Character) or setting

**Salt and Pepper** - sprinkle details in intriguing pattern throughout the plot; adds mystery

2. Choose, from scene to scene, when to bring reader in close with immediacy ( see the scene through action and dialogue) and when to use narrative passages to move plot along

**VIVID, SENSORY PICTURES**

1. Use the five senses to create an holistic view for the reader

2. Use analogies as contrast and comparison techniques (similes/ metaphors)

3. Employ figurative language in balanced doses:

Apostrophe: addressing non-present entity as if present

Hyperbole: exaggeration without literal interpretation

Personification: giving human qualities to inanimate objects

Onomatopoeia: words mean what they sound like when spoken aloud

**Polishing Power of Observation**

(Pencil Dancing /Messer)

**Wake up . . . Fuzz on Petals**

1. To see takes time ( O’Keefe single flower paintings); singling out an object forces you to see the detail.

2. Less is more ( simplicity of 3-5 blooms in vase: Japanese tradition)

3. Imaginative details add life to writing.

4. Details add depth and richness; grounds the work

5. Details allow sense of the larger whole; train yourself to see them

**ACTIVITY**: Character snapshot ( hand-out); view O’Keefe’s One Hundred Flowers and describe one fully.

**Principle of Devoted Attention**

1. Devoted attention : “becoming one with the viewed object”

2. Requires patience to see the essence or core

3. BE open to whatever; BE deeply affected and pay attention for all is worthy of attention

**Thinks Like An Alien**

1. Knowledge can create taking things for granted

2. Think “beyond the box”

3. See life’s contradiction, humor, wonders, with clarity

4. Unwritten Rules:

a. Never become an expert - treat all as if first time

b. Don’t be limited by Rules - confront new ways to solve a problem

c. Be flexible

d. Stand up for your own opinion ( crush sacred cows if necessary)

e. View all as if never seen before

5. Ordinary mind stops short, limits opinions, and gets stuck

**ACTIVITY:** Only Visiting this Planet: visit garden and describe from Alien’s POV).

**Pencil Dancing**

1. See many differing POVs - be flexible in thinking

2. Pencil Dancing: observations through drawing/writing

a. Outer Seeing - contours, natural properties, texture, color, shape

b. Inner Seeing - metaphors, emotional imagery

**ACTIVITY:** using colored pens/pencils, respond in drawing to music

**Drawing Inspiration From Your Past . . . Memories**

1. Your memory is you: experiences, words, images

2. Search and Rescue Journey: Excavating Memories

a. Childhood - Where? People? School? Hometown specifics?

b. Put yourself back into an experience; relive through imagination to gain sensory details; write down as they resurface

c. Use memories as resource; material for creative projects

d. Myth of Goddess Kali ( p.95 description); facing your past

**ACTIVITY:** Remembering: Describe an emotionally charged event from your personal past

**Coming to Your Senses: Five Senses**

1. Senses - feelers that connect us to the world; inner and outer

2. “When creativity comes from the inside out, it becomes embodied. It had substance.”

3. Sensory disconnection occurs in over-stimulation situations

4. Least used senses: smell, touch, taste (immediate, visceral)

Most used senses: sight, sound

**ACTIVITY**: Recall smells of specific items; write 6 ways to describe the smell of fallen leaves (compare to other scents)