



THE AFRICAN SAVANNA A Descriptive Writing Prompt

In this lesson, students describe an opening scene in the savanna that ends with a hook. They don't actually write a complete story, just the descriptive introduction. This causes chuckles because kids instinctively want to finish the story.

NOTE: This lesson can address the following Common Core State Standards: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.3.D and W.5.3.D.

Now for the lesson!

1. Tell the story line: "You are going to write a descriptive introduction to a story that takes place in the savanna. You won't actually write the complete story. You are going to describe what the savanna looks and sounds like and what all the animals are doing. Then, you'll end the introduction with a hook, like, 'All the animals were calm, except for the hyenas.'"
2. Show the big picture of the savanna (p.3) to your students so they can imagine the savanna looking calm from a distance.
3. Next, show and/or give copies of the savanna animals page (p.4) Give the students time to look at the pictures and imagine what each animal or groups of animals might be doing.

Antelope
Cheetahs
Elephants
Gazelle

Giraffes
Lions
Leopards
Meerkats

Rhinoceroses
Serval
Wildebeest
Zebras

4. Have the students brainstorm details about what the animals do, see, hear, smell, taste, feel and touch. Encourage them to think about what the animals' ears or tails or doing, what the babies or moms are doing, what the dads are doing etc. Allow them time to think of many details. List their ideas on the board:

Drink water, bathe or sit in water
Roll in mud, Bat or swat flies
Smell hunted animals left to eat
Lay down, rest, nap or sleep
Walk, roam, chase, run, jump, leap or climb
Eat leaves, chomp, lick, bite, play



5. Show the 5 Sections:

The Calm Savanna
Animal 1 Sees and Hears
Animal 2 Smells and Tastes
Animal 3 Feels and touches
The Pacing Hyenas

Remember: K-1st Graders are encouraged to write 1 sentence for each section,
2nd Graders 2 sentences, 3rd Graders 3 sentences and so on.

Now to write!

Guide the students through the following steps so their story is organized and complete. They are free to write these ideas in their own words.

1. Begin the description by writing how the savanna seems calm. Describe the landscape or even the weather. Mention what some of the animals might be doing.
2. Choose one animal to write about. Write 1-5 sentences about what the animal or group of animals is doing.
3. Choose another animal to write about. Write 1-5 sentences about what the animal or group of animals is doing.
4. Choose a third animal to write about. Write 1-5 sentences about what the animal or group of animals is doing.
5. Describe how the hyenas look and what they are doing.
6. Give the students time to use marker to color zebra stripes, a lion's mane, a giraffe pattern or a cheetah's spots in their border.





ANIMALS IN THE AFRICAN SAVANNA
All pictures have been taken from www.pixabay.com



cheetah



elephants



flamingos



gazelle



giraffes



hippopotamuses



hyena



lion



meerkats



ostrich



rhinoceros



The Savanna



warthog



wildebeest



zebra