Descriptive Writing- a sensory moment in time

1. Choose to write from the perspective of a camp prisoner, Nazi soldier, American soldier liberating a camp, or a town bystander.
2. Complete the graphic organizer.
3. Use 3-4 sensory details for each sense.
4. Organize this information on a clean sheet of paper.
5. Add an illustration.
**Descriptive Writing—**
*a Sensory Moment in Time*

It is important for students to develop historic empathy for both ordinary and extraordinary characters. Understanding how characters felt in the context of the time in which they lived is a challenging but necessary skill to understand history. For example, President Andrew Jackson may have cared about the well being of Native Americans but he knew that he would have to use military force against Americans in order to prevent them from moving on to Indian Land. This would have been impossible in the context of his day and he would have been frustrated with the result of the Trail of Tears.

**Instructions:**

1. Students must first read and investigate the topic in-depth. For instance, students must have an in-depth understanding of the details related to the Trail of Tears.

2. Ask students to create a list of ordinary and extraordinary characters from the period of study. For example, President Jackson, a Georgia farmer, a young Cherokee boy, or a Cherokee Chief.

3. Students research the information on one of the characters.

4. They then place the character in an event or moment in time. For example, a student could choose a young Cherokee woman during the Trail of Tears.

5. Students brainstorm ideas to complete the visual chart using the senses—sound, sight, taste, feel, and smell.

6. Students complete the chart template (see student sample).

**Definition:**

**Illustration:**

If I were there, I would have experienced...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sounds</th>
<th>Sight</th>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Feel</th>
<th>Smell</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Definition:** In the years 1838-1839 over 10000 Native Americans were forced to walk over 1100 miles to east; General Jackson said they should be removed from their homes to where winters were worst of the Mississippi River by 1839.

**Table:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Sight</th>
<th>Touch</th>
<th>Feel</th>
<th>Smell</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beard:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Footsteps:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whispers:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description:**

During the Industrial Revolution, child labor was a cheap way for employers to get workers. Many children got their limbs cut off or even died from the machinery.

- **Sound:** She would hear the machine, the cries of children, and her employers’ voice.
- **Sight:** She would see her work for the day, her parents, their bodies, and the terrors of the Industrial Revolution.
- **Touch:** She would feel her worn-out hands, the size of the machinery, and her family’s tears.
- **Smell:** She would smell the polluted air, the sweat from the workers and steam.
Definition: The Holocaust is a horrendous time period from 1933 to 1945. 6,000,000 Jews and many others were slaughtered by the Nazis.

If I were a Jewish Child...

I would hear the screaming of my fellow Jews and the booming orders of the Nazi Monsters.

I would see the death of many Jews and the emptiness of their souls.

I would taste the constant burning pain in my stomach, as if it were my soul.

I would feel the rusty blood and smell of vomit coming from my empty stomach.

Sound: The clean air would be replaced by the smell of smoke and the sounds of Yosemite and the eagle's screams.

Sight: The sky would be replaced by the burnings bodies and the fire in their eyes.

Scent: I would feel the burning smell of the dead being burned.

Taste: I would taste the burning of my skin, as if it were my soul.

Feel: I would feel the burning of my skin and the pain of the dead.

Smell: I would smell the burning of the bodies and the ashes from the prisoners.