

Modelled Example: The Sign



Compose an interesting start that utilises descriptive and figurative language.

Either: describe the setting or describe the character or both.

Modelled example of an engaging orientation

The wind hissed through the broken fence as Sami stared up at the old sign. *NO ENTRY*, it said in faded red paint, hanging sideways like it was too tired to stand straight. Behind it stood an empty amusement park, quiet and still, like it had been holding its breath for years.

Sami’s jacket flapped in the breeze, and his dark eyes scanned the place like a detective looking for clues. He held his sketchbook tight—he always carried it when he went exploring. People said the park was haunted. But Sami didn’t feel scared. He felt like something was calling him in.

Understanding and Language Techniques

1. What is the effect of the phrase “*the wind hissed through the broken fence*”?

2. What kind of mood is created by the words “*quiet and still, like it had been holding its breath for years*”?

3. What type of figurative language is used in the line “*his dark eyes scanned the place like a detective looking for clues*”?

4. What does the sign saying “*NO ENTRY*” suggest about the setting?

5. What does the simile “*hanging sideways like it was too tired to stand straight*” make you imagine?

 **Inferencing and Interpretation**

6. What can you infer about Sami’s personality from the way he reacts to the sign and setting?

7. Why do you think Sami carries a sketchbook with him?

8. What does it mean when the text says “something was calling him in”? Do you think it’s real or symbolic?

9. Why might people say the park is haunted?

10. Do you think Sami is brave? Use evidence from the text to explain your answer.

 **Author’s Purpose and Effect**

11. Why do you think the author started the story with a description of the wind and the fence?

12. What is the purpose of using figurative language in the opening paragraph?

13. How does the author make the setting feel mysterious?

14. What effect does the short sentence “*But Sami didn’t feel scared.*” have on the reader?

15. Why do you think the author chose to end the paragraph with a sense of curiosity rather than fear?

 **Vocabulary and Word Choice**

16. What does the word “*faded*” tell us about the sign and the place?

17. Find one word or phrase that shows the place has been empty for a long time.

18. Which word in the passage suggests movement or action? How does it help the reader visualise the scene?

 **Creative and Reflective Thinking**

19. If you were Sami, what would you do next? Explain your reasoning.

20. Write your own sentence using figurative language to describe what Sami might see when he steps through the fence.

Composing a Backstory:

Purpose: To provide context and depth by explaining events that occurred prior to the main narrative.

Key Elements:

- Illustrate significant past events that influence the current situation.
- Clarify how the character(s) arrived at the present circumstances.

Modelled Example:

Three years ago, Sami's older brother vanished like a shadow swallowed by the night. It happened during a dare—one foolish step into the amusement park's rusted jaws. The gate had groaned open like an old man waking from a nightmare, and then... silence. All they ever found was his torch, lying cold on the gravel like a dropped candle at a forgotten vigil. Since then, the park had become a ghost in the town's memory—its rides frozen mid-scream, its colours drained like an old photograph. People said the wind inside whispered secrets. Sami had been younger then, small and scared, his heart a fluttering bird in a cage. But now, holding his sketchbook like a shield, he returned—ready to face the place that had stolen his brother and haunted his dreams.

Literal Comprehension

1. Who disappeared three years ago, and what was he doing at the time?

2. What object of Sami's brother was found after his disappearance?

3. What is Sami holding when he returns to the amusement park?

Inferential Comprehension

4. Why do you think the amusement park is described as having “rusted jaws”?

5. What do you think the torch symbolises in the story?

6. Why might Sami be returning to the park now, even though he was scared before?

Language & Literary Devices

7. Identify a simile in the paragraph. What does it help you imagine or understand?

8. What is being personified in the sentence “the gate had groaned open like an old man waking from a nightmare”? What effect does this have?

Author’s Purpose & Effect

9. How does the writer create a mysterious or eerie atmosphere in this backstory?

10. How do the metaphors and personification help us understand Sami’s emotions?
