

Set the Scene—Create an Information Bank

Think about your setting. Is it inside or outside? Are there any unusual shapes? Is it night or day? What season is it? What is the weather like? The temperature?

Example: Raindrop bubbles popped on the steamy pavement.

What can the main character see? (objects, people, scenery)

Example: Cracker crumbs covered the car seat like a fine layer of desert sand.

What can the main character hear? (teenagers screaming, wind whistling, trees crashing)

Example: The lonely trumpet stumbled over a few, solitary notes.

What can the main character smell? (thick chocolate fudge, burnt steak, wet dog, hot bread)

Example: Even after twenty-five years, Creighton could still smell the spicy hot peppers and Italian beef of his favorite Chicago sandwich shop.

What can the main character feel? (rough, smooth, sandy, hairy, fuzzy, cold, sticky)

Example: The dry grass crunched like burnt potato chips under Lydia's feet.

What can the main character taste? (salty chips, spicy salsa, sour apple)

Example: Tart raspberry ice cream swirled around Maity's tongue as she walked toward the beach.

What colors can the main character see? (gray blue sky, yellowed lace, blackened trees)

Example: Water-washed weeds lay flattened along the creek's edge.
