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AP English III

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The Descriptive Essay

Due 9/5/12

We've studied excerpts from works where description set the tone. Now it's your turn to write a descriptive essay that describes a place while switching between at least two specific tones.

1. Choose a place to describe, real or fiction.
2. Choose two contrasting tones that you are going to communicate in your writing (see your Analysis Vocabulary document for specific tone words if you're stuck). Pick them out before you write; don't just start writing and hope for a tone or a tone shift. Choose interesting tones, perhaps unexpected ones or even tones that seem odd to change between.
3. Choose what details you'll focus on. Good description doesn't try to describe EVERYTHING in the scene. Try and engage more than just the sense of sight. Remember, the details you choose to emphasize and how you describe them is what creates the tone.
4. It may help to imagine that your description is the opening chapter of a novel. Choose which point of view you'll use. Include no dialogue of specific characters. End your chapter before any real action begins.
5. The end result should be 2 pages, 12 pt. Times New Roman, double spaced, with a header like the one on this assignment sheet.
6. Have fun with it.
7. **REMEMBER:** You must develop two clear tones. I'll ask you about this before you turn in and grade you accordingly. Ideas for tone shift: Change in focus at your location—from left to right, top to bottom, etc.; change in time—from day to night, summer to fall, childhood to present, etc.; narrator can "retrace" his steps—walks down the street, then walks back, etc.
8. What if you're having trouble getting two pages? Without looking at your draft, make a sensory chart. Fill in in and see what new things you uncover. "Explode" a detail. Try figurative language.

Brainstorming Chart Place you'll describe: _____

What you see	What you hear	What you smell	What you feel (sensations gathered through skin)	What you taste (will not apply to all locations)