Description of a person

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Title: Description of a person.
Abstract
Through this article, aimed at students of English as a foreign language, an interesting guide is offered to carry out a descriptive writing of a person. Anyone who needs directions to develop a descriptive written text, will be able to find the keys to do it successfully. With a simple sequence of steps to follow, the student is given recommendations on the type of vocabulary or grammar to be used, among other useful aspects.

Keywords: Description, People, English

Título: Descripción de una persona.
Resumen
Por medio de este artículo, dirigido a alumnos del inglés como lengua extranjera, se ofrece una interesante guía para llevar a cabo un escrito descriptivo de una persona. Todo aquel que necesite indicaciones para desarrollar un texto descriptivo, aquí podrá encontrar las claves para hacerlo con éxito. Con una sencilla secuencia de pasos a seguir, se da recomendaciones al alumno sobre el tipo de vocabulario o gramática a utilizar, entre otros aspectos de utilidad.
Palabras clave: Descripción, Personas, Inglés.

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Descriptive texts create an impression in the reader’s mind. It is important to bare in mind that the writer expresses his or her opinion / impression of a person, place, event as he or she perceives it: the feelings that this person, place or event transmit him or her. Therefore, the content of the text will be subjective, most of the times.

However, you can also find objective descriptions with a clear purpose: offer information to the reader.

Through the choice of words, the author helps the reader to create an image in his or her mind about what is being described and makes it seem real.

Sometimes, students may find it difficult to write certain types of texts. Here, they will find an interesting guide to write descriptions.

Following these steps they will be successful when writing a descriptive text.

BRAINSTORM
Write down the information you want to include in your composition (physical description, personality, typical behaviour). You do not have to write complete sentences.

Answer the following questions: what does he / she look like?, what is he / she like?, what does he / she do?, do you like it?

PLANIFICATION
Organise the information into three paragraphs.
- Paragraph 1: introduce the person. Include a physical description. Explain what he / she does and if you can give details about his / her early life (biography).
  Use time expressions.
- Paragraph 2: give the main facts about his / her life and character.
  Use linkers, modifiers, adjectives and relative clauses.
THINK ABOUT LANGUAGE

1. Vocabulary: use varied adjectives and modifiers to avoid using “very” and “good” all the time. They will make your description rich and attractive.

   It is important to bare in mind that sometimes you want to use more than one adjective to describe someone and his or her appearance.

   What happens is someone’s hands are both small and thin? Would you write small and thin hands? Or… thin and small hands?

   What is the correct order of adjectives in the English language? The preferred one is the following:
   - Opinion (pretty, gorgeous, ugly…)
   - Size (small, big, huge…)
   - Shape (long, square, round…)
   - Age (new, old, young…)
   - Colour (blue, red, pink…)
   - Origin (Spanish, French, British…)
   - Material (plastic, glass, paper…)
   - Purpose (painting, driving, cooking…)

   Let’s see some examples:
   Mi nice is a beautiful, young, Spanish girl.
   The novelist was an ugly, tall, thin man.
   He has got beautiful, big, round, brown eyes.

   Examples of adjectives: dynamic, kind, reserved, attractive, sociable, two-faced, bossy, etc.
   Examples of modifiers: a bit, extremely, rather, slightly, etc.

2. Grammar:
   - Relative clauses: He is a quiet person, which is something I admire.
   - Comparative and superlative form of the adjective: She is the most intelligent student in the class.
   - Present simple – past simple / adverbs of frequency: He never helps his friends.

3. Alternatives to the verb “to be”:
   She / He looks, seems, wears, etc.

4. Useful expressions such as:
   - The first thing you notice is his / her...
   - He / She is in his / her mid 20s.
   - I respect / admire him / her because...
   - The thing I most like about him / her is …

5. Linking words
CONTRAST | ADDITION
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But | Also
However, | Moreover,
Although | In addition,
Despite / In spite of | Furthermore,