

The Butterfield Library Bicentennial Writing Contest Elementary School Prompt Sheet



Background Information:

The painting “A Pic-Nic on the Hudson” shows friends enjoying a picnic along the Hudson River, near the Village of Cold Spring on Constitution Island. It was painted in 1863 by the Hudson River School artist Thomas Rossiter, and is displayed at the Butterfield Library.

Writing Prompt: Write a poem about the picnic, imagining that you were attending the picnic too! What would you have talked about? Seen? Eaten?

Optional Artwork:

If you would like, you can create a piece of artwork to accompany your poem. It could be a painting, drawing, collage, sculpture, or anything else!

FUN FACT

There’s a long history of people writing poems about paintings! In fact, there’s a word for it, EKPHRASIS. (ek-fruh-sis) Ekphrasis refers to poems about paintings and paintings about poems. Across the centuries, poets and artists have often turned to one another’s work for inspiration.

Brainstorming Worksheet

Directions: Record **imagery** you would like to include in your poem. Keep in mind that imagery includes not just images, but the five senses: sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch.

Here is an example! If I was writing a poem about winter, here is some imagery I might want to include. Notice that these are all phrases – you do not need to write in complete sentences.

Sight: the faded red color of my sled, kids dressed in brightly colored puffer jackets, a hill covered in thick fluffy snow

Sound: kids scream and shout in delight as they sled down the hill

Touch: snow seeps into my boots, my winter coat feels snug and warm, the cold wind blows in my face as I zoom down the hill

Smell: the crisp, earthy smell of snow, hot chocolate cooking on the stove

Taste: sweet, thick hot chocolate with whipped cream and marshmallows

Now you try! Let's take a trip back in time to 1863 Cold Spring! What imagery might you include in your picnic poem?

Sight: _____

Sound: _____

Touch: _____

Smell: _____

Taste: _____



