



O'level
Foundation
Set 4

The Write Tribe

DESCRIPTIVE



What is needed in a descriptive essay?

- 1 *Use your five senses to describe*
- 2 *Use present tense to describe*
- 3 *You may include personal experiences
(change to past tense)*
- 4 *One paragraph, one point*
- 5 *Don't forget the explanation part of the
question*



3. DESCRIPTIVE:

Describe two different possessions which are very important to your family – one which is useful and one which is for decoration. (Remember you can describe the possessions, how your family got them and why they are so important to your family.) (English O-Level October/November 2022)

As I sit here reflecting on the possessions that hold immense importance to my family, two particular items come to mind - one that is practical and functional, and the other that serves as a decorative symbol of our heritage. My family hails from Kerala. It is coined as God's own country because it is an oasis of natural beauty with wonderful weather. Our heritage is rich and naturally our home is decorated with ornaments to remind us of our ancestry.

The first item is an heirloom passed down through generations - an intricately crafted, grinding stone that in our family for many generations. My mother had to import this stone specially into Singapore. It was brought to our family by my great-grandfather, as a wedding gift. In the era of smart home gadgets, electric food processors, one might wonder, what is the use of a grinding stone. This grinding stone had fed over 3 generations. Many family recipes were born out of this stone whether it is 'coconut chammandi' - a coconut chutney or my particular favourite, 'puli thenga chammandi' - which means tamarind coconut chutney. The grinding stone is called, 'Ammi' and it sounds like the word mother. The stone comes with a flat stone called 'Ammi Kal' and a cylindrical stone called 'Kulavi'. This is an ancient food processor. My mother always tells me never to separate the 'Kulavi' from the 'Ammi' as they are like mother and child. Despite having a smart home kitchen, my mother traditionally uses the grinding stone to prepare spice pastes. Grinding with the stone takes quite a lot of strength. My mother enjoys using this ancient device. She believes the taste is better! Honestly, I feel the same too. Even though it is a piece of stone, many of my friends from other cultures find it to be a wonderful decoration. However, the grinding stone is not only aesthetically interesting, it is also a very functional tool as it prepares taste of a our heritage!



The second item that holds a special place in our hearts is an old, ornate mirror that hangs in our living room. This mirror is not only a decorative piece but also a cherished possession of my family. Just like the grinding stone, we have had this piece for generations too. However, it is more of a decorative piece. Its astounding beauty had captured the eyes of all our visitors. It holds a sentimental value to all of us. The mirror is a traditional piece called, 'Aranmula Kannadi'. It has great historical and cultural value and is believed to bring good luck and prosperity to a home. Noted for outstanding beauty and its making shrouded in secrecy, the Aranmula Kannadi is considered a medieval marvel in the annals of metallurgy. It was in use much before the appearance of modern-day glass mirrors. The technical know-how behind the making of this unique metal mirror is confined to only some households of master craftsmen in Aranmula. Even though, our family line has no connection to manufacturing these special mirrors, we take pride owning an important part of our culture. These mirrors can be expensive and there are many counterfeits. The metal mirror manufactured in Aranmula is a front surface reflection mirror, which eliminates secondary reflections and aberrations typical of back surface mirrors. The exact metals that form the alloy are said to be a combination of copper and tin. Besides making the right combination of the alloy, the craftsmen get involved in intensive polishing sessions, which would go on for several days to obtain the desired reflective surface. Even today, craftsmen use traditional, indigenous methods and materials to produce the reflecting wonder called Aranmula Kannadi. It takes great practice and tremendous amount of focus and patience to produce a perfect mirror piece. When you touch a piece of paper on the surface of an ordinary mirror, a gap remains between the paper and the image produced. But, in the case of the Aranmula metal mirror, there will be no gap between the image and the object. This indicates the fact that only a real, distortion-free image is produced on an Aranmula Kannadi. This mirror is an important part of our daily life, reflecting not only our appearance but also our family's history and values.

Both of these possessions, the grinding stone and the ornate mirror, hold immense importance in my family. They are not simply objects but rather hold a great deal of sentimental value, reflecting our heritage and history. They are a reminder of who we are and where we come from, and for that reason, they will always hold a special place in our hearts.



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