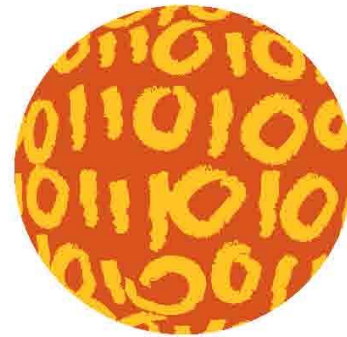


benetech

TECHNOLOGY
SERVING HUMANITY



Book Boost: Access for All Challenge, Guidelines for Creating Accessible Ebooks (Part 2): Image Descriptions

Sue-Ann Ma, Benetech Labs
December 12, 2017



DIAGRAM CENTER
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Benetech's Global Literacy Program



Bookshare: Making reading accessible

Bookshare is the world's largest library of accessible ebooks and lets people with visual, physical, and learning disabilities like dyslexia read in ways that work for them.

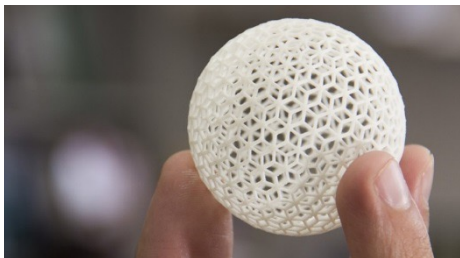


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Born Accessible is a partnership with publishers and content creators to help them build accessibility into books when they are first created.

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– DIAGRAM Community Member



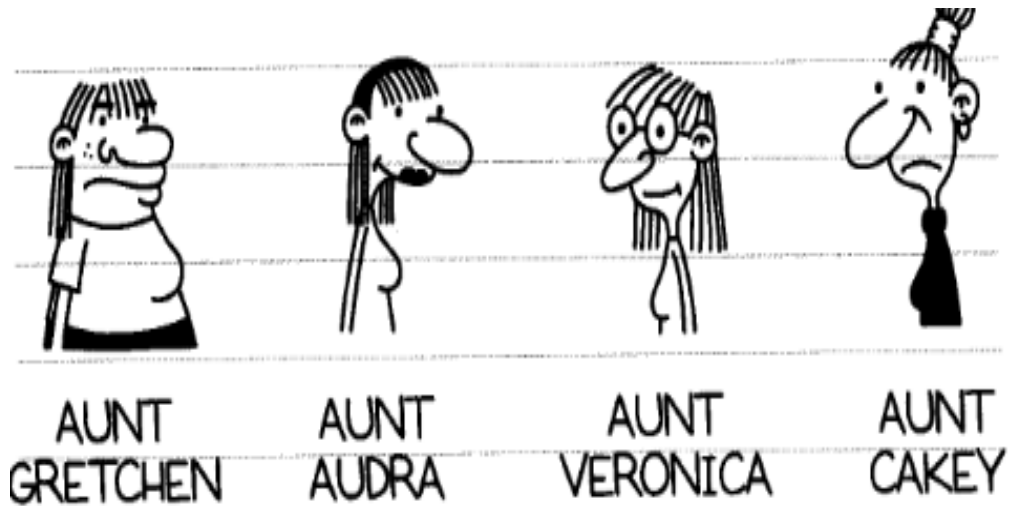
Example 1:

Which description is better?



Description A:

Greg's four aunts are pictured in a row with their names under the portraits. Aunt Gretchen is plump, Aunt Audra is fashionable, Aunt Veronica is nerdy, and Aunt Cakey is mean.



Jeff Kinney (2013). *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Hard Luck (Diary of a Wimpy Kid #8)*. Abrams.

Description B:

Greg's four aunts are pictured in a row with their names under their portraits. Aunt Gretchen has shoulder-length hair and bangs, a t-shirt, a large, bulbous nose, and freckles. Aunt Audra also has shoulder-length hair, but it's darker than Aunt Gretchen's. She has an oval-shaped nose, she is smiling and wearing lipstick. Aunt Veronica has straight hair, bangs, glasses, and a pointier nose. Aunt Cakey has her hair in a bun on top of her head. She has an oval-shaped nose, she is frowning and wearing a black turtleneck.

Example 2:

How can we improve the description?



Jeff Kinney (2013). *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Hard Luck* (*Diary of a Wimpy Kid #8*). Abrams.

Description:

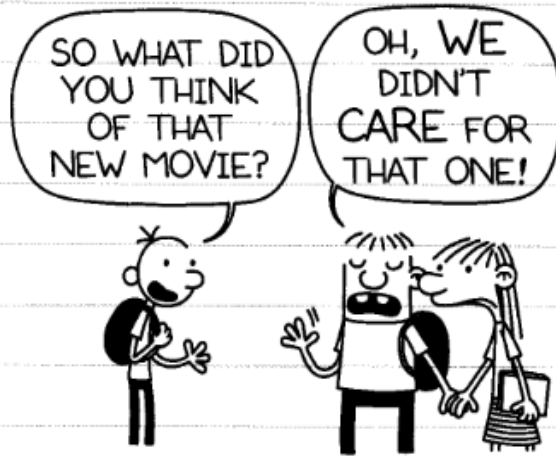
From left to right: a boy frowns with his mouth open as a boy in a baseball cap punches him in the jaw. In front of the boy who is punching, another boy kneels down and reaches towards a shoe. Next to the boy punching the other boy, a boy stretches both arms out and has his mouth open. A boy behind him sticks his tongue out and strangles the boy in front of him. To the right of these two another boy has his mouth open and reaches down towards the shoe with one hand while grabbing another boy by the hair with the other hand. The boy whose hair is being grabbed is flung over another boy's shoulder. To the right of these boys are two more boys reaching forward for the shoe from the back, one boy flying through the air toward the shoe, and another two boys on the ground, one of whom is biting the other boy's back as he reaches for the shoe. 13 boys are fighting for a shoe on the ground in front of them.

Better Description:

13 boys wrestle and fight for a shoe that sits on the ground in front of them.

Example 3:

How can we improve the description?



Jeff Kinney (2013). *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Hard Luck* (*Diary of a Wimpy Kid #8*). Abrams.

Description:

A boy has a black backpack on, and a shirt and pants. He has three hairs sticking up from his head. He has one hand up with three fingers on it outstretched. There is a speech bubble above his head and in it are the words “SO WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THAT MOVIE?” Another boy is holding hands with a girl. He has one hand up and it appears to be moving. He has big buck teeth, a shirt, pants, and a black carrying pack on too. There is a speech bubble above his head that says “OH, WE DIDN’T CARE FOR THAT ONE!” The girl has straight hair and she is wearing a t-shirt and a striped skirt and she is holding a book in her other hand. She appears to be frustrated and doesn’t have a book bag.

Better Description:

Greg looks at Rowley and Abigail, who are holding hands, and asks “So what did you think of the new movie?” Rowley waves one hand and has his eyes closed. He says, “Oh, we didn’t care for that one!”



Poet Training Tool

Website: <https://poet.diagramcenter.org/index.html>

POET TRAINING TOOL
A BENETECH INITIATIVE

[ABOUT Poet](#) [WHEN to Describe](#) [HOW to Describe](#) [PRACTICE Describing](#) [Contact Us](#)

Helping you write effective image descriptions

Introduction to Accessible Images

We have an unprecedented opportunity to ensure all content that is "born digital" is also "born accessible" so that all readers have access to the information they need. Use the interactive features on this website to determine when additional details are necessary and what makes for a good description.

WHEN to Describe Images

Does every image and diagram require a description? Learn how to determine when and when NOT to provide supplemental descriptions.

[LEARN WHEN TO DESCRIBE IMAGES](#)

HOW to Describe Images

Need tips on how to write effective, extended descriptions for your target audience? Read about general guidelines relevant to all images and best practice approaches for specific classes of images.

[LEARN HOW TO DESCRIBE IMAGES](#)

PRACTICE Describing Images

Want to take a stab at writing descriptions for particular images and diagrams using our interactive tools? Upload your own content and verify that you're on the track!

[PRACTICE DESCRIBING IMAGES](#)

[Provide Feedback](#)

The Poet Training Tool is an open source project that has been developed for the community. Share your feedback to help make this resource even better!



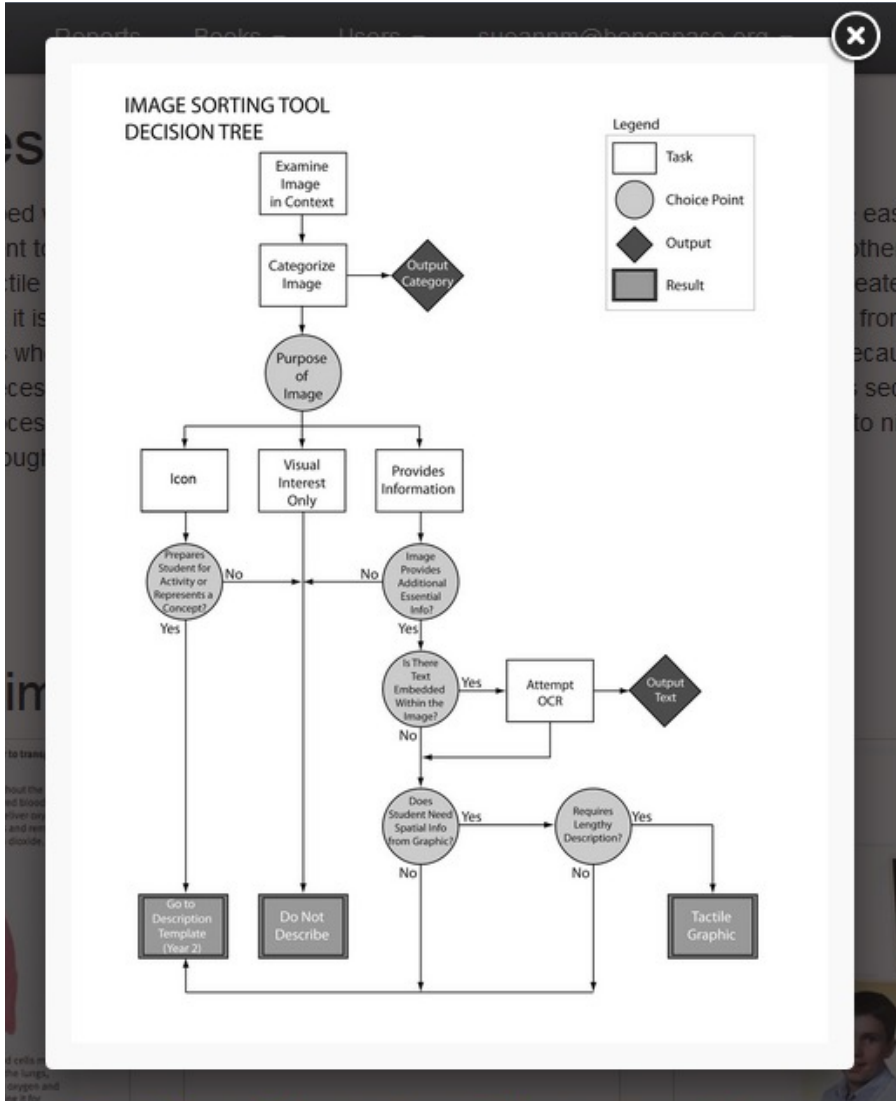
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When to Describe?



Example 4



View Image in Context (in New Browser Tab)

Which of the following best describes this type of image?

- photo
- drawing
- cartoon
- illustration of a process
- flowchart
- table (data display)
- graphic organizer (hierarchy charts, decision tree, etc.)
- map
- timeline
- graph (e.g. bar, circle, pie, line)
- primarily text (embedded graphics are decorative)
- math equation (no embedded graphics)

Next

Example 4



View Image in Context (in New Browser Tab)

Comments from the Experts

The image is a "drawing" that requires a text description.

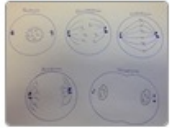
The image is found in a children's picture book and contains information that helps paint a more comprehensive portrait of the story. The image can be made fully accessible via a text description that provides supplemental details about the relationships and mannerisms between characters in the book.

Done



How to Describe? (general image guidelines)

Context is Key



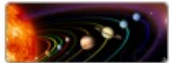
➔ START THIS EXAMPLE

Consider Your Audience



➔ START THIS EXAMPLE

Be Concise



➔ START THIS EXAMPLE

Be Objective



➔ START THIS EXAMPLE

General to Specific



➔ START THIS EXAMPLE

Tone & Language



➔ START THIS EXAMPLE

Consider Your Audience



[View Full Sized Image in New Window](#)

Guidelines:

- Know your target reader (e.g. age, culture, subject-matter expertise).
- Use vocabulary and phrases appropriate for the reader.
- Reference examples and details the reader will understand (this includes objects and attributes used in the description).

Next

Consider Your Audience

Try again. The description is accurate, but the use of vocabulary such as “juxtaposition” and “proclivity,” is far too complex for a young child. This might have been an appropriate description if it had been written for a more mature audience.



[View Full Sized Image in New Window](#)

Context:

- This is a photograph of the Louvre Museum in France at night. The entrance to the museum is a large pyramid made out of glass.
- This is a night photograph of the Louvre Pyramids in front of the Louvre Palace. The juxtaposition of the architectural structures highlight I.M. Pei's proclivity for combining modern structures and classical forms.
- This is a photograph of the Louvre Pyramids was taken at night. The low-angle shot, paired with indirect lighting of key architectural elements, makes for a dramatic composition.

Next



How to Describe? (specific image guidelines)

Practice Describing

These image guidelines apply to a specific image type. Use the left navigation to skip to a specific section or scroll to see all. • [More introductory text...](#)

Art, Photos, and Cartoons

- Drawings & Paintings
- Photography
- Cartoons & Comics

Chemistry

- Element Diagrams

Diagrams: Illustrated

- Comparing Objects, Simple
- Comparing Objects, Complex
- Comparing Events Over Time

Diagrams: Relational

- Venn Diagrams
- Radial/Web Diagrams
- Hierarchy/Tree Diagrams

Flow Charts

- Basic
- Multiple Start Points
- Multiple Paths


Cycles

- Basic with Arrows
- Multiple Cycles

Graphs

- Bar Graphs
 - Vertical Bar Graphs
 - Horizontal Bar Graphs
 - Double Bar Graphs

Drawings & Paintings

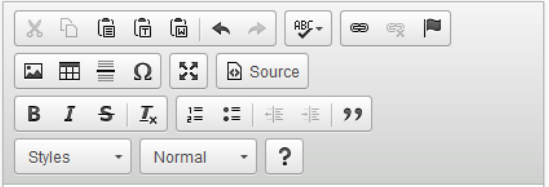


Harcourt School Publishers 2008
[View Full Sized Image in New Window](#)

Guidelines:

- Check for captions. It is possible that the drawing/painting may be decorative or only minimal additional information will be needed.
- If a caption is brief or not included, describe some key details, setting, subject, and action first, and then include texture, orientation, and color, if relevant.
- Consider subject and grade level. For example, a college-level art history textbook would include all details from subject to technique.
- Do not introduce new terms or concepts that don't appear in the surrounding text.

Try Describing the Image:



this is a sample description

body p

Previous Next

Your Description:

this is a sample description

Sample Description:

A painting depicts early Native American farmers working in a big, open field. There are many men and women, and some children working together. The women are bent over, digging long rows in the field with primitive hoes, tools with long wooden handles with flat, rectangular stone blades.

Close Previous Done



How to Describe: Drawings & Paintings

Drawings & Paintings

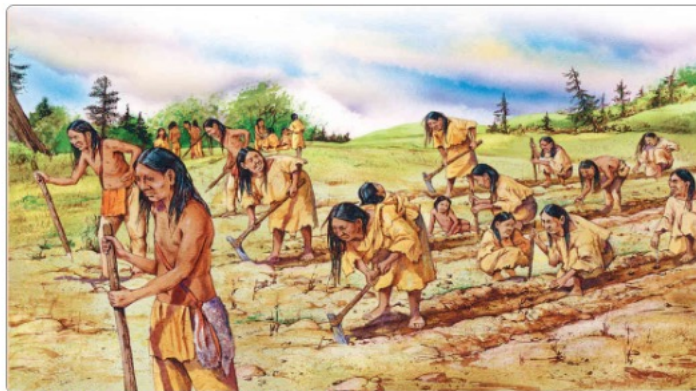


© Harcourt School Publishers 2008

[View Image in Context \(in New Browser Tab\)](#)

Guidelines:

- Check for captions. It is possible that the drawing/painting may be decorative or only minimal additional information will be needed.
- If a caption is brief or not included, describe some key details, setting, subject, and action first, and then include texture, orientation, and color, if relevant.
- Consider subject and grade level. For example, a college-level art history textbook would include all details from subject to technique.
- Do not introduce new terms or concepts that don't appear in the surrounding text.



© Harcourt School Publishers 2008

[View Image in Context \(in New Browser Tab\)](#)

Your Description:

this is an example of a painting from a history book

Sample Description:

A painting depicts early Native American farmers working in a big, open field. There are many men and women, and some children working together. The women are bent over, digging long rows in the field with primitive hoes, tools with long wooden handles with flat, rectangular stone blades.



How to Describe: Cartoons & Comics

Cartoons & Comics

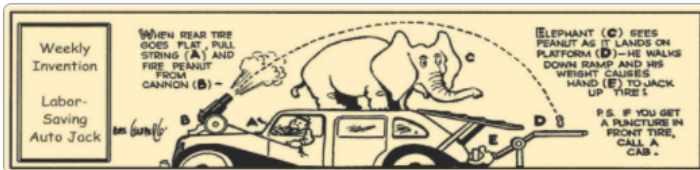


© Pearson Education 2009

[View Image in Context \(in New Browser Tab\)](#)

Guidelines:

- Describe the picture first to give a set-up, and then write out the text provided.
- The text may be edited if it would not make sense unless there was a long explanation.



© Pearson Education 2009

[View Image in Context \(in New Browser Tab\)](#)

Your Description:

this is a comic strip

Sample Description:

A comic strip is entitled Weekly Invention Labor-Saving Auto Jack. The comic shows a man sitting in a car with an elephant on the roof and a cannon on the hood. A ramp slants from the roof of the car down to a platform near the trunk. The platform is connected to a mechanical hand. The comic reads: When rear tire goes flat, pull string and fire peanut from cannon. Elephant sees peanut as it lands on platform. He walks down ramp and his weight causes hand to jack up tire! P.S. If you get a puncture in front tire, call a cab.

Practice Describing

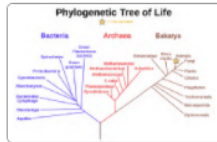


PRACTICE Describing Images

This section allows you to apply the best practice guidelines and resources to your own materials. We recommend working in pairs so that you can discuss your writing process with a partner at the end. Start by uploading a single image (must be .jpeg, .png, or .gif), then follow the instructions laid out in this section.

1. Upload an Image to Describe

phylogenetic tree.PNG



2. Select a Classification that Matches Your Image



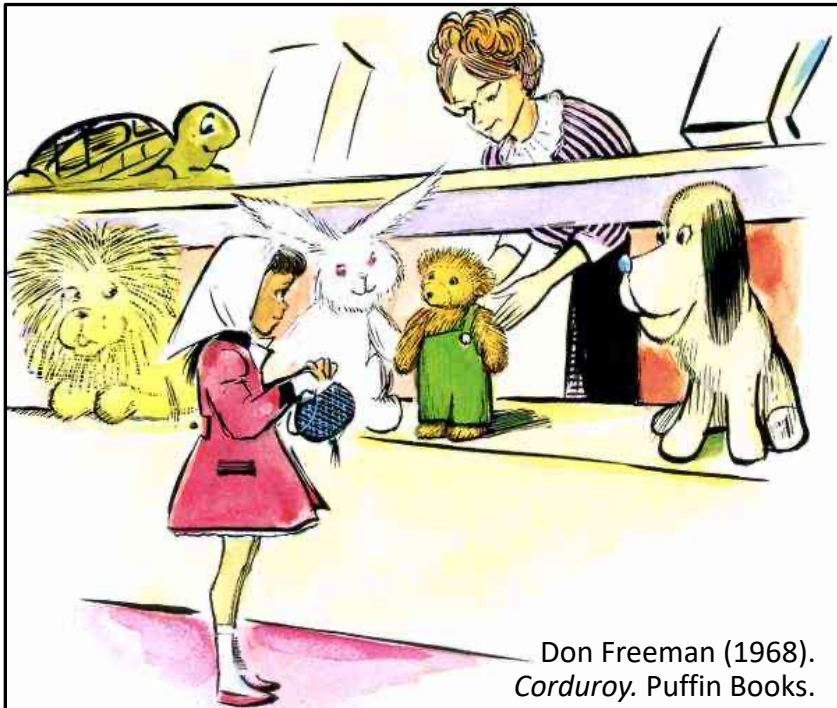
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Example 1: Descriptions for Young Readers



Corduroy was just waking up when the first customers came into the store in the morning. And there, looking at him with a wide, warm smile, was the same little girl he'd seen only the day before.



Don Freeman (1968).
Corduroy. Puffin Books.

"I'm Lisa," she said, "and you're going to be my very own bear. Last night I counted what I've saved in my piggy bank and my mother said I could bring you home."

Description: Lisa stands in front of a case filled with toys. She is holding up a round, blue purse. A woman reaches into the case towards Corduroy, who stands in the case, facing Lisa.

Explanation: Since we've met Lisa already, we can refer to her by name. We've seen other images of her, so there's no need to describe her outfit more than the initial time. Since we haven't seen her purse before, that should be described. While we could go into detail about the other toys in the case, we aren't because they aren't important to the story. Also, describing them would make this explanation rather wordy, which we're trying to avoid.

Example 2:

Descriptions for Young Readers



"Don't be silly," said Frog. "What you see is the clear warm light of April. And it means that we can begin a whole new year together, Toad. Think of it," said Frog.

"We will skip through the meadows and run through the woods and swim in the river.

In the evenings we will sit right here on this front porch and count the stars."



Description: Frog and Toad are standing on the porch. Frog looks upwards and gestures up with one hand. His other hand rests on Toad's shoulders. Toad has one hand on his head and has both eyes closed. He's wearing green-and-white spotted pajamas.

Explanation: The text tells us that Frog and Toad are chatting and that Toad is tired. It doesn't go into detail about the porch or what Frog is wearing. Describing Toad's pajamas reinforces the fact that he's tired and gives the reader something to visualize.

Arnold Lobel (1970). *Frog and Toad Are Friends*. HarperCollins Publishers.

"You can count them, Frog," said Toad. "I will be too tired. I am going back to bed."



Try Describing – Example 2:

Maaloo looked at the trees, creepers and plants. Not a single potato could he see.



Sample description:

Maaloo and his dog, Kaaloo, crawl around the vegetable garden searching for potatoes.

Vinita Krishna (2006). *Aaloo, Maaloo, Kaaloo*. Pratham Books.



Try Describing – Example 3:

“Dadi, the potatoes aren’t ready yet,” said Maaloo, putting the empty basket down.

“No Maaloo, there are plenty of potatoes. Look carefully,” said Dadi.



Sample description:

A smiling Dadi is seated comfortably outdoors on a swing bench as she talks to a frowning Maaloo. There is an empty basket on the ground next to Maaloo.

Vinita Krishna (2006). *Aaloo, Maaloo, Kaaloo*. Pratham Books.



Try Describing – Example 4:

But the barber said, “Today, I have no time to cut such long hair!”



Noni (2007). *Annual Haircut Day*. Pratham Books.

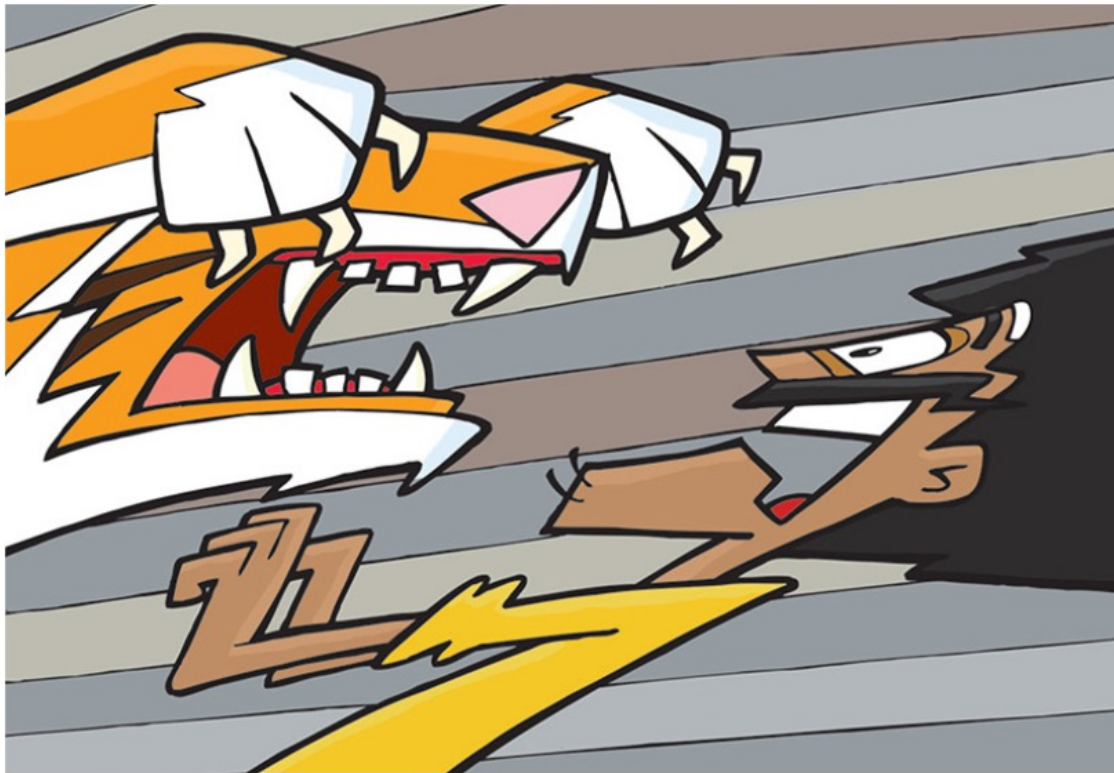
Sample description:

The barber holds his hand up to a frowning Srigeri Srinivas who is slouched over. The barber is serving another customer and there are three additional customers in the queue. “House Full” is written on a board.



Try Describing – Example 5:

Poor Sringeri Srinivas was so scared, so scared, so scared that...



Sample description:

A roaring tiger, bearing teeth and claws, lunges towards Sringeri Srinivas. Sringeri Srinivas's eyes and mouth are wide open as he backs away from the tiger.

Noni (2007). *Annual Haircut Day*. Pratham Books.



Questions?



Resources

- Poet Training Tool: <https://poet.diagramcenter.org/>
- DIAGRAM Webinars (& related guidelines)
 - Accessible Image Sample Book:
<http://diagramcenter.org/diagramwebinars.html#aisb>
 - Complex Images:
<http://diagramcenter.org/diagramwebinars.html#compleximages>,
<http://diagramcenter.org/diagramwebinars.html#a11yimages>



Thank You!

Sue-Ann Ma (sueannm@benetech.org)