

ENGLISH ACTIVITY FIVE: SETTING THE SCENE

LINK TO ART ACTIVITY 3

Learning Objective

- To describe setting, characters and atmosphere;
- To compose narrative.

Resources

The paintings in [Historical Context Chapter 2 | Creative Responses](#). Choose a picture for the whole class to study or if you have access to copies, let each student choose a painting. Nevison's *Harvest of Battle* is a good choice for this activity.

MAIN TASKS

1. Either verbally or in writing, describe the painting thinking about the following:
 - a. Scene setting
 - b. Narrative
 - c. Colour
 - d. Emotional impact
 - e. Painting techniques
2. Either:
 - a. Choose two of the characters depicted. What are they doing? What might their story be? Write a narrative using dialogue about either what has happened just before the scene of the painting, or what happens afterwards to them thinking about the interaction between them.
 - b. Choose one of the characters and write about either what has happened to them, or what happens to them next.
3. Imagine your own scene from the War – it might be in the trenches or in a hospital, prisoner of war camp. It might not be about fighting but about waiting and finding ways of keeping yourselves occupied or about manual tasks of cooking, training, digging, stacking shells. Or it might be about people back home waiting, or trying to get on with their lives such as wives, mothers, girlfriends, parents, children, wounded soldiers.

Think about your scene visually – what is the setting? What colours are your scene? Who is in it and what do they look like? Describe your imaginary scene as if it were a painting, mapping out both what it looks like and what effect the scene might have on a person secretly viewing it.

4. Paint or draw your scene. See **ART ACTIVITY 3** for details on what sort of skills and methods you might want to use.