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Sensory Details

The Tale of Despereaux is rich with sensory details—that is, details that appeal to the reader’s five senses: touch, taste, smell, sight, and hearing. Consider this description of the dungeon:

“It was quiet in an ominous way; it was quiet in the way of small, frightening sounds. There was the snail-like slither of water oozing down the walls and from around the darkened corner there came the low moan of someone groaning in pain. And then, too, there was the noise of the rats going about their business, their sharp nails hitting the stones of the dungeon and their long tails dragging behind them, through the blood and muck.”—*The Tale of Despereaux*

Get into groups of three. Read through Section 3 of this novel, and list sensory details on the chart below. A few have been included for you.

touch	sharp nails hitting stones of dungeon			
taste				
smell				
sight	tails dragging through blood and muck			
hearing	groaning in pain	slither of water		

Hope and Planning

At the end of Chapter 28, the narrator asks,

“Reader, do you think that it is a terrible thing to hope when there is really no reason to hope at all? Or is it (as the soldier said about happiness) something that you might just as well do, since, in the end, it really makes no difference to anyone but you?”

—*The Tale of Despereaux*

Many of the characters in this novel have hope. Despereaux hopes that he will be allowed to serve Princess Pea. Roscuro hopes to take revenge on the Princess. Miggery Sow hopes to become a princess, just like Pea. What do you hope for?

Below, write one paragraph listing three things you hope for. Perhaps you hope for a particular job someday, or a car, or a horse. Maybe you hope for someone in your life to be happy, or you hope to be reunited with someone you’ve lost.

In your second paragraph, examine how you can make your dreams come true! For instance, if you hope to become an airplane pilot, you can take flying lessons and learn all there is to know about planes. If you hope to travel to Europe to see castles and dungeons and monuments, write about how you plan to get there.

Hope, combined with a plan, is a magical thing. With preparation and dedication, you can make your dreams come true!

Hope

Hope
