

Sample Paper: Depicting a place (Curley)

Curley 1

John Curley
Professor Hacker
English 101
12 February XXXX

Journey under Water

Each time I've tried to describe the beauty I have discovered under the sea, my friends have countered with scenes from Jaws and its toothy sequel, Jaws 2. In Jaws 2, you may recall, the bride of Jaws snacked on two scuba divers, a fast-moving water skier, a helicopter pilot, and the resident diving instructor before the local sailboat regatta became its main course.

Had you traveled with me over the past ten years, you would have experienced a far more peaceful world under water: from coral gardens along the Pacific shores of Thailand, to an underwater wedding in Australia, to oil tankers sunk by Nazis along the New Jersey coast, to the pastel hues of the Caribbean Sea.

My favorite spot is Davis Beach, St. Croix, in the Virgin Islands. Picture, if you will, a deserted sandy beach graced with palm trees. There is no McDonald's. We may come upon a little squirrel monkey or a strolling peacock taking an interest in our visit. Usually the welcome trade winds sway the palms in the 80-degree tropic heat. Here even the waves pause, allowing sunlight to dance through them as they break over the reef.

Let's wade out through a century-old cut in the reef. This cut, I've been told, was made by early Danish explorers.

After snorkeling around a few rocks, we begin the dive. As we descend to the first level, about 30 feet down, colorful parrot fish, butterfly fish, and damsels greet us in a field of red

Title is centered.

Thesis presents Curley's central impression.

By using *we* and *Let's*, Curley invites readers to join him under water.

Vivid details
bring underwater
experience to life.

and yellow coral. This coral is yellow, courtesy of Mother Nature, but where nibbled by the parrot fish, it has turned bloodred.

The coral reef guides our downward path. Our descent is carefully monitored with frequent and meticulous readings on the depth gauge that I carry. The living reef of coral drops to 1,800 feet. Our limit is 100 feet. Descending, we see the clear water turn dark, the effect of the warm water settling on the darker, colder water like that of oil floating on vinegar.

Now, down to 60 feet. We look about for Mo and Maureen, a photogenic couple who have startled divers new to the North Star Cliffs. These moray eels have never, as far as anyone knows, behaved like the man-eaters of movie notoriety. They look forward instead to the snacks the divers have saved from their lunch.

On our way back, we ascend slowly, relaxing and hovering over purple fields of filigree coral fans reminiscent of old Spanish lace. Apart from their beauty, they are functional navigational guides. The waves, rolling in to shore, create an underwater current which flutters the fans in an offshore and onshore undulating motion. Guided by the reef, we head for the land, loitering along the way in crystalline waters warmed by the sun.

Perhaps on our next dive we will chance upon a stingray, as I did recently off the coast of St. Thomas. With a little encouragement, he spread out his magnificent wings and with more grace than a ballet dancer lifted himself to unfurl an eight-foot wingspan. He then withdrew, feeling perhaps his obligation to perform completed. Awed by his performance, I forgot to snap a picture. But there will be other journeys under water for me, and, if I've whetted your interest, I hope for you too.

Curley ends with
enticing detail and
a final invitation to
readers.