

THINKING WITH MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Video: The Beat of the Street

Setting
(realistic fiction)

Gray loves the outdoors. He likes to camp, hike, and view wildlife. Gray found an interesting story in the latest edition of his monthly *Camper and Hiker* magazine. It described what a night in the woods was like. Gray had spent many nights camping in the woods. He was surprised to find that so much happened in the woods while he slept peacefully in his tent. He didn't realize that a setting he thought he knew so well could change so much depending on the time of day. He decided that next time he went camping he would go on a midnight hike. Then he could experience what the woods were like at night first-hand. He also decided that, in the meantime, this story provided him with a new understanding of a familiar setting.

Now it's **Your Turn!** Read ***A Night in the Woods***. Create your own *Think Aloud*.

Then compare your thinking with **Gray's Think Aloud**.



Before You Read:

Think about what you may already know about the woods at night. Consider what you know about setting. Share your thoughts with your family and friends.

While You Read:

Ask your parent, brother, sister, or friend to read this story with you. See if together you can determine the time and location that the story takes place and what it is like there. You may want to highlight these words in orange. (You may use any color available to you!)

After You Read:

- Think about these questions, "When did the story take place?" "Where did the story take place?" "What was it like?" Discuss your ideas with your family or friends.
- Together, create a collaborative Think Aloud about how you used setting to better understand when and where this story takes place and what it was like there. Share your *thinking* with each other.

A Night In The Woods

The campground hushes as evening falls. Inside tents, drowsing campers are tucked into sleeping bags and nodding off. Campfires with cooling embers send thin fingers of smoke into the air.

Beyond the dewy grass, the woods wait for darkness to settle. Then it gives hints at the undercover life it holds. Nameless hoots and howls make up a spooky lullaby. Deep croaks bubble from a black pond. From perch to perch, nature places its mystery calls.

While campers dream, animals hunt and hide by milky moonlight. Branches crack and leaves rustle as the night passes. With the first traces of morning, the shadowy woods grow quiet once again.





Compare your Think Aloud with Gray's Think Aloud:

Gray's Think Aloud: I know that I can learn a lot about the setting if I pay close attention to the author's description of the time and place that the story occurs. As I read the first sentence I realize where the story takes place when I read the word "campground." I understand that it takes place in early evening when I read the words "evening falls" because this is a way authors often describe the time at sunset. As I continue reading, I notice that the verbs such as "hushes," "are," and "send" are written in the present tense, which signal that the action is occurring now. I remember that authors often use sensory words to make their settings more clear. When I read that the campers are "nodding off" I'm thinking of the rhythmic sounds of deep breathing that people make when they sleep. When I read "thin fingers of smoke into the air," I'm visualizing the wisps of smoke rising from the campfire.

I remember that sometimes authors describe what a setting feels like. As I continue reading the next paragraph, I see the words "dewy grass" and I think about how wet my shoes get when I walk on grass in the early evening. I also know that authors describe sounds in order to make their settings more complete. When I read the words "hoots," "howls," and "croaks," I'm thinking about the birds, mammals, and frogs that make these noises. When I read these sounds combined with the phrases "spooky lullaby," "black pond," and "mystery calls" I'm thinking the author is creating an eerie mood.

As I read the third paragraph I realize that the author continues to develop this mood by describing more sounds when I read, "Branches crack" and "leaves rustle." At the end of the story, I realize an entire night has passed when I read, "the first traces of morning." I'm thinking it must now be sunrise when I read "shadowy woods." I know that when the sun shines on something, it creates a shadow. As I read about how the woods will "grow quiet," I'm thinking it's just in time for the campers to wake up!

A Night In The Woods

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Beyond the **dewy grass**, the woods wait for darkness to settle. Then it gives hints at the undercover life it holds. Nameless **hoots** and **howls** make up a **spooky lullaby**. Deep **croaks** bubble from a **black pond**. From perch to perch, nature places its **mystery calls**.

While campers dream, animals hunt and hide by milky moonlight. **Branches crack** and **leaves rustle** as the night passes. With **the first traces of morning**, the **shadowy woods grow quiet** once again.



Questions to Think About:

- How does Gray use the time period and verb tense to determine when the story takes place?
- How does Gray use the location provided by the author, sensory words, and mood to determine where the story takes place and what it was like there?
- Why might this process help you to understand setting?
- When might this process be useful?