

The Beat of The Street Practice Activities

A Trip to Times Square

It is a hot July evening in New York City's Times Square. Electronic billboards called "spectaculars" cast a shifting, neon glow over people spilling out into the sidewalks. Overhead, massive buildings compete with each other to hold up a still wide-awake twilight sky.

Sounds thicken the sticky air in this giant city theme park. Languages from every pocket of the world rise up from the steady push of tourists. On the gritty streets, honking horns pierce the solid rumble of trains, coming in and going out. Street musicians tap their toes, drumming and strumming their songs on the corners.

At every turn, Times Square invites its visitors to join in. Eat at our restaurants, it calls out. Applaud in our theaters. Dance to our music. Shop in our stores. And whatever you do, remember to visit this one pulsing snapshot of New York City.

First, please read the story.

Next, answer the following questions:

1. Where did the story take place?
2. When did the story take place?
3. What was the setting like in the story?
4. What type of verbs did the author use: past, present, or future tense? List 3 examples.

Finally, locate descriptive words, details, and images the author used to create a realistic and accurate setting.

How would you describe the mood of the story?

Compare your answers with **Kimberly's Think Aloud**

Before You Read:

One of the most important aspects an author must choose for a story is the setting.

The setting includes:

Location of the story (General or Specific) and **Time period of the story** (Past, Present, or Future)

A strong setting unifies the story by helping the author describe the characters, location, and plot accurately and realistically.

A well-written setting can also help establish the mood and atmosphere of the story.

The Subway

Entering the subway station, the sounds of traffic above become muffled. Streams of people walk the cool, dimly lit stairs to the underground tunnel below. Everyone is in a hurry to home, to work, to school. Near a bench, a man strums a guitar with the case open. Some slow to listen, tossing dollar into the case as a thank-you.

As the trains rush in, restless children are pulled closer. People pay attention. The doors open, and the train belches passengers, and swallows those coming aboard. An oily, mechanical smell hovers in the air.

Inside the train, people settle in for the ride, reading, listening to music, or resting their weary heads. The train speeds and rocks along, at times seeming to float above the tracks.

First, please read the story.

Next, answer the following questions:

1. Where did the story take place?
2. When did the story take place?
3. What was the setting like in the story?
4. What type of verbs did the author use: past, present, or future tense? List 3 examples.

Finally, locate descriptive words, details, and images the author used to create a realistic and accurate setting. How would you describe the mood of the story?

Compare your answers with **Nasir's Think Aloud**