

Techniques Summary

In a narrative-writing, the word *scene* refers to a small chunk of action or conversation that helps develop the larger plot. Scenes usually occur in one place, and they use *pacing* to speed up or slow down the action for the reader. Read more about the 5 techniques below and then answer the questions on page 2.

1. **Gaps.** This technique refers to the act of intentionally leaving information out (the video, for example, did not even address the baby that was crying). Because the narrator isn't being transparent about what they're doing, thinking, and/or feeling, this type of scene can feel like it goes by very quickly.
2. **Summary.** Summary is similar to Gaps, because it causes the speed to go by quickly; when you use the summary technique, you're not intentionally leaving out information. You are simply recapping what happened, without going into too much detail.
3. **Scene.** When using the basic Scene technique, you are deploying the 5 senses to describe a moment for the reader. The goal is create a sense of pacing that mirrors the way an event occurs in real life.
4. **Dilation.** The word "dilation" means "to become bigger, more open." You can apply this technique to a scenes that are either high-emotion (such as "fight or flight" moments) or scenes that are very boring ("novel experiences). When writing, you will include more and more details so that the scene grows and grows.
5. **Internal Scene.** The Internal Scene technique helps develop the experiences of a character, for the reader. There are 3 different methods you could use to show what a character is thinking and feeling:
 - a. *Reflection* is when a character uses the 5 Ws (Who, What, Why, Where, and When) to show a character's thought process.
 - b. *Introspection* is when a character examines how they're feeling in the moment.
 - c. *Speculation* is when a character thinks about moments from the past or in the future and try to make guesses about how that event could have gone or will go.

Reflection Questions

Now that you know more about the 5 different ways to pace a scene, think about a real or imaginary scene you're familiar with and use it to answer the check for your understanding of the 5 different narrative techniques.

1. **Gaps:** Write about an example from your own life when you used **Gaps** to talk about an event: What was the situation and what motivated you to intentionally leave out information?
2. **Summary:** Write about an example from your own life when you used **Summary** to talk about an event: What was the situation, and what motivated you to quickly summarize information?
3. **Scene:** Write about an example from your own life when you used the basic tenets of **Scene** to talk about an event: What was the event, and which of the 5 senses did you rely on the most?
4. **Dilation:** Write about an example from your own life when you used (or could have used) **Dilation** to talk about an event: Was this moment highly-emotional or very boring, and what specific details do you remember?
5. **Internal Scene:** Write about an example from your own life when you used **Internal Scene** to internally process an event: What was the situation, and did you use Reflection, Introspection, and/or Speculation?

Dilation Practice

Choose a real or imagined scene as your base scene. This can be one of the scenes you reflected about, on page 3—or even a scene from your favorite book, movie, or TV show. With the details of your imaginary or real scene in mind, fill in the details you already know about the scene, in the first column: brainstorm 1-3 details per sense. Then, brainstorm 1-3 details that you could add into the scene and write them in the second column.

Senses	Details you already know (1-3 per sense)	Details you could add (1-3 per sense)
Sight		
Sound		
Smell		
Touch/feeling		
Taste		

Internal Scene Practice

Think about one of the characters in your real or imagined scene and brainstorm answers to the Reflection, Introspection, and Speculation questions below; write your answers in your writing journal.

Reflection

What is the situation?	Who is involved?
Where does the scene take place?	When did the situation start?
Why did the situation start?	

Introspection

Speculation

How do I (or the main character) feel right now?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How could the situation be different, in the future? • How could the situation be different, in the past?
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