

A Study in Diction

Now that we have discussed “By the Waters of Babylon” and the evolution and breakdown of language, you are going to put your skills to use.

Imagine that you live at some time in the distant future, after the world has been destroyed by some catastrophic event (like the nuclear holocaust that had destroyed society in “By the Waters of Babylon”). You have left your village to go on a journey. On the tenth day of your walking journey, you come upon the remains of a deserted, destroyed city—the city of “OMERS”.

Write a narrative of walking through Somerset, KY as if you were encountering it for the first time. Remember, civilization has been destroyed and, with it, the vestiges of technology and convenience. How would you describe walking down Highway 27, with its broken pavement and darkened, broken streetlights? What about Kroger? How could you explain the self-checkouts or aisles of food when no one in your village has ever encountered anything like this? Remember, too, that you do not have the necessary language to identify these things—for example, you couldn’t say “As I walked through the broken, automatic doors” or “The self-checkouts sat broken and dark”. Use your **diction** to describe your new surroundings.

50 points possible

You will be graded on your ability to SHOW, not tell, the things you encounter on your journey through this strange, deserted place. You should use strong details and diction to help us interpret the things you are describing. Remember, much of the language for things (such as cell phones, computers, electricity, self-checkouts, cash register, street lights, cars, etc.) has been lost due to disuse.