

Revise a Descriptive Essay

Student Submission

The following is an example of a formal descriptive essay. Although you will not write one this length, take a look at the whole essay to get a feel for the purpose and style.

A Wall Erected to Keep Freedom Out

The Berlin wall began to be built on August 13th, 1961 by the German Democratic Republic (GDR) of East Germany. The GDR alleged that the purpose of the construction of the wall was to keep West Berliners out, but in fact, the wall was built to bar East Germans from leaving. Initially, wires with clusters of short and sharp spikes that were set at intervals in the ground, soon became a wall consisting of 96 miles of concrete and barbed wire barriers separating East and West Germany. The Berlin Wall kept the western half of the country free and eastern half oppressed for 10,316 days - from 1961 to 1989. In nearly three decades both halves of the country developed different characteristics, and it seemed like they did not even belong together. However, their citizens and the entire world knew the wall had to come down. On November 9th, 1989, therefore, by mistake East and West Germany were again reunited thank to a communist officer.

East Germany mistakenly announces the end of the communist regime. Afraid that the liberalizing reforms in West Berlin would affect the East side, the leaders of East Germany sealed the borders with armed men in an effort to prevent its citizens from escaping. However, after this dramatic step, the protests started getting bigger and bigger. Consequently, on November 9, 1989, in an attempt to reduce the stress on the population, Communist leaders tried to deceive East Germans by announcing at a Press Conference that they would liberate the travel restrictions, but "the official announcing the liberalization botched the messaging so badly that it sounded—unbelievably—as if the ruling regime might just have opened the Wall, effective immediately" (Sarotte, n.d., para. 7). After watching the announcement on TV, thousands of West Berliners started to gather at the main checkpoint to see if they would actually be able to cross the border while a few guards including Harald Jäger did not know what was happening. Unintentionally, East Germans leaders announce the liberalization of East Berliners.

A particular East German officer became an important thing for the coming down of the wall. Harald Jäger, who had been loyal to the communist regime for 25 years, was the officer in charge of the passport-control unit at the Bornholmer Street, the biggest checkpoint, on the night of November 9, 1989. After the news on TV, more and more East Germans began to meet at the main gate where Harald Jäger was. His boss told him to not let anyone out. However, the historian Sarotte stated that Jäger was "struggling with the fear that he was dying of cancer, and angry over insults from higher-ups, he disobeyed direct orders and started letting East Germans through the gate" (n.d., para. 2). That was the first time Jäger didn't follow the higher ranking person's orders, but not the only time. After that, he allowed West Germans to cross the border into East Germany out of curiosity, and East Germans to come back for their families. Even though Harald Jäger played such an important role in the Berlin Wall coming down, he became unemployed after the reunification of East and West Germany. Luckily, he did not die of cancer, and now he spends his time giving interviews and traveling with his wife. By defying his boss, officer Harald Jäger changed the fate of the wall.

West and East Germany had again become one. After East Germans were allowed to cross the gates to the West side, Germans as one began to celebrate. Burton said, :“Late into the night of November 9th, 1989, West and East Berliners came together laughing, celebrating, hugging, and weeping” (2018, para. 14). People were standing over the wall that once had divided the nation holding candles and singing songs of freedom. That weekend over 2 million East Germans visited the West side and celebrated together while removing pieces of the wall. November 9th, 1989 is considered the official date of the fall of the Berlin Wall, but the the actual demolition did not begin until June 13th, 1990. Almost a year later, on October 3rd, 1990 that the reunification of East and West Berlin was made official. Thus, the eastern and western Germany sides joined again as a nation.

After the accidental announcement about the end of the communist regime and through officer Jäger’s help, the eastern and western sides had the chance again to become a nation. The Berlin Wall is still today considered the mightiest and most long symbol of the Cold War. Due to the tyranny from the eastern side, more than 5,000 East Germans escaped to West Germany and at least 171 died while trying. Where the wall was once situated is now marked with cobblestones reminding citizens and also tourists of a nation physically and ideologically divided. “The stark and brutal Wall cut like an scar through the old city and, in the eyes of the world, became a symbol for the stifling totalitarianism of East Germany. The world cheered those who escaped across it and mourned those who died at its foot” (Burton, 2018, para. 15). Germany became one country again on October 3rd, 1990, and almost 30 years later Germany is considered the largest national economy in Europe, proving that its citizens have grown together as a nation.

Exercises:

Exercise 1: Revise an essay

Choose one paragraph from this example essay to revise. What suggestions would you give the author? Rewrite this paragraph by following your own revision suggestions.

References

Burton, B. (2018, February 6). The Berlin Wall Has Been Down For As Long As It Was Up. Retrieved from https://www.victimsofcommunism.org/witnessblog/2018/6/4/the-berlin-wall-has-been-down-for-as-long-as-it-was-up?gclid=CjwKCAiA4t_iBRAPeIwAn-vt-yKpdC_zlFB9_qXjRXsdqwnV4LzdYXz5-TyqXNte8DCTwpyroVSmGxoCspUQAvD_BwE

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