



## Getting Ready

In a few sentences, capture the look and the feel of Moe's Café.



## Starting Your Story

Now that you have visited Moe's Café, write three ninety-word mini-stories. You'll have to decide who will tell the story, where it will start, and if the tone will be serious or comic. Here are some possibilities.

1. Moe comes up to your table and offers to sell you the place for \$200.
2. The waitress whispers to you that she is being held captive.
3. The police charge in and break up an illegal gambling operation in the back.
4. The lady at the table next to you turns out to be your long-lost sister.
5. You find a treasure map on the floor.
6. You play a song on the jukebox and a woman at the counter starts screaming.
7. You suddenly discover a solution to a problem that has been bothering you for months.

**OR:** Come up with your own idea for a mini-story.



## Write Away!

1. Pick the mini-story you like most and make it longer. Consider flashing back to relevant events in your narrator's earlier life.
2. Study your new draft and consider the following: Do the characters seem real? What motivates them? Is there some suspense? Does the setting contribute to the story line?
3. Write the final draft.



## Read and Write

Consider reading "A & P" by John Updike, another story in which the setting—in this case a grocery store on the outskirts of a resort community—has a significant effect on the action of the story. Notice how the narrator's "overfamiliarity" with his surroundings contributes to a life-affecting decision. Then create your own story set in a "place with a personality."



## On the Screen

Watch *Star Wars: Episode IV* (rated PG) and pay particular attention to the saloon scene on the planet Tatooine. Notice how director George Lucas's attention to detail makes this an unforgettable setting.

### Today's Special

Want to see how another student used this prompt to begin a full story? See "Hey, Tom" on page 110.