

Detail

Consider:

He went on till he came to the first milestone, which stood in the bank, half-way up a steep hill. He rested his basket on the top of the stone, placed his elbows on it, and gave way to a convulsive twitch, which was worse than sob, because it was so hard and so dry.

— Thomas Hardy, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*

Discuss:

1. How do the details in this passage prepare you for the *convulsive twitch* at the end of the passage?
2. This passage does not describe the character's face at all. What effect does this lack of detail have on the reader?

Apply:

Plan a pantomime of the scene described in this passage and perform it for the class. After several people have performed their pantomimes, discuss the facial expressions they used in their pantomimes. Discuss the similarities and differences and how they relate to the use of detail in the passage.