

Major Assignment 1 ~ English 1101

Personal Narrative (Memoir): Writing about a Personal Experience

In this essay, you will recall an interesting experience, such as an event from a vacation, volunteering, learning something new, going to camp, interacting with an unusual person, etc. Through sensory descriptions, you will explain why the event was significant, and reveal how the event affected you during and after your experience.

You may want to link the significance of the experience to meeting a meaningful person, like an event where you met your best friend or your significant other. You could also write about an event that inspired you and/or marked a turning point in your life. Explain how the event was influential to your life or personal development. An experience that was very unusual or humorous is also good material for a memoir.

This is a personal narrative, so the only source you need is your memory. However, you may interview any friends or family members in order to obtain accurate dialogue when writing about your experience, if you would like.

- Remember to clearly describe the setting, people, etc.
- Show the significance of the experience by giving the readers clear descriptions of the things you saw, your thoughts, and the emotions you had at that time.
- Share your thoughts about how the event and/or the person seemed significant at the time.
- Although first person “I” point-of-view should generally be avoided in academic writing, this essay will be about your own experience. Therefore, the word “I” can and should be used as you describe the events. Use a close narrative voice, as if you are talking to a group of people whom you want to know more about you. However, avoid using the word “you” to address your audience.

Composing a personal narrative teaches you:

1. To read and analyze your own life as a subject worthy of exploration, reflection, and analysis;
2. To establish a clear connection between seemingly isolated events from your past with your present; including how you interact with others
3. To present your thoughts to your readers in a coherent and engaging way;
4. To write with a clear sense of purpose (a reader should be able to tell why you are writing and what you want them to understand as a result of reading your memoir);
5. To become a critical reader of your own writing.

Expectations and Due Dates

Criteria and Set-up

- 1000-1500 words (MINIMUM 1000, MAXIMUM 1500)
- Correctly use MLA or APA conventions.
- Formatting: double-spaced, and 12 pt. font (formatting rules in your syllabus)

Content:

- Audience: Educated readers who want to be “shown” a significant experience.
- Point of view: First person. Use a close narrative voice. (Use “I” to refer to yourself.)
- Logical sequence of events and times.
- Give a thesis statement/main purpose and support it throughout your paper.

Due Dates:

- 150-250 word write-up due **Wednesday, September 6** - Bring typed or handwritten copy to class
- Thesis statement/Outline due **Monday, September 11** - Bring one hard copy to class, and put one in iCollege drop box before class.
- Rough draft deadline: **Wednesday, September 13, 2017**. Bring two hard copies to class for peer review, and put one in iCollege drop box before class.
- Final Draft due at 11:59 PM on **Sunday, September 17** at 11:59 pm via iCollege dropbox.