

# Narrative Assignment

Write a personal narrative about an event, experience, time that was transformative (that changed you), for the better or worse. It can be small or it can be big (it should only be a rather short event) but it must have had some impact on you.

Tell me what happened, and craft a story.

**1-3 pages/12 pt/double spaces/times new roman**

## **Must:**

- Must incorporate all plot elements
- Be a story from your own life
- Lead me in with a hook
- Show sensory detail (smell, sight, taste, touch, hearing)
- Stick to a POV (3rd person vs 1st person)
- Purposeful dialogue that shows action and not idle conversation
- Leaves the reader with a lesson or emotional connection
- Includes lively, active verbs
- Includes descriptive language (awesome adjectives and adverbs)
- Includes the use of figurative language/literary devices (flashback, irony, alliteration, etc)
- Follows MLA formatting (i.e. Times New Roman font, 1" margins, 12 point size, double-spaced, indented paragraphs)
- Transitional words and phrases Varied sentence lengths

## **Must not:**

- Be fictional
- Be more than 3 pages
- Be the wrong font/have bolds/strange capitalization/etc

## **How will it be graded?**

Your grade will be based not only on the final product, but also on showing that you **completed all the steps of the writing process**. These steps are:

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Prewrite</b> | Your graphic organizer or free write will help you generate ideas. |
| <b>Draft</b>    | The first version of your essay.                                   |
| <b>Revise</b>   | Fix the organization, ideas and provide proof                      |
| <b>Edit</b>     | Correct spelling, punctuation and grammar                          |
| <b>Publish</b>  | Turn it in for me to grade it                                      |

## **What is a Narrative Essay?**

“Narrative” means telling what happened. An essay is different from a story in that the narrative in the essay is a tool that’s used to make a point. It’s pretty likely that you will not discover the point until you have spent some time working on it.

### **How do I get started?**

Look at your charts and life maps. Do not attempt to write about a large chunk of time, such as “middle school”, or “My 2 week vacation”. Instead, the essay should examine in detail a single event such as, “My first track meet”, or “What it’s like to walk home from school in a hurricane.”

### **What do I do during the revising process?**

If you haven’t typed the draft into the computer, now’s the time. Revising is the time to move things around, and figure out where you need more evidence, or need to delete something because it doesn’t fit.

### **What happens during editing?**

This is the fine-tuning phase. Once you have good ideas and organization, then you begin examining sentences word-by word for grammar, for spelling and punctuation. Cut out unnecessary words and phrases such as: really, very, a little bit, kind of, sort of. Also, don’t use big words unless it is totally necessary. Think about the audience for this narrative. You are probably telling a story as if you are talking to a friend, so use everyday language in this essay. As we get into more academic types of writing, the tone will change.

#### **See tips below to help you as you write your personal narrative.**

- 1) Have a strong lead for your introduction paragraph.
- 2) Each paragraph needs a transition, topic sentence, detail sentences, conclusion sentence (indent paragraph by hitting the TAB button).
- 3) The personal narrative is about ONE SHORT MOMENT in time (30 minutes or less).
- 4) Expand on details. Your character and setting descriptions should be so detailed that I could draw a picture from your written description.
- 5) Have a reflection paragraph for your conclusion. In this reflection paragraph, look back on this moment and explain how it has affected you, the people around you, and/or the world around you. *Be sure not to use YOU in this. You are reflecting, not telling the reader how to feel.*

- 6) Re-read and have someone else read it. Check to make sure each sentence has a subject and predicate. Make sure you are in the same tense (past or present) the entire time, check comma placement, dialogue rules, etc.
- 7) Make sure you have a title and the paper is in MLA format (at least 2 FULL pages, no more)
- 8) Use strong word choice. Get rid of words such as good, bad, happy, etc.
- 9) Show me your emotion and explain WHY you were devastated or why you were overjoyed.
- 10) Take your time; do not wait until the last minute. **You are capable of this task, I know you can succeed.** Writing papers take time, but there is a great sense of accomplishment when hard work has been put into a paper.