

Narrative Essay Writing

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Your writing task: Your assignment is to write a narrative about a formative moment in your life that somehow defined who you are (the event changed you or you learned about an important idea). You must include at least one paragraphs that reflects on how you changed or what did you learned, and WHY it is significant.

Then, the goal will be to present these to the class next week (or the next week considering the snow day, we'll have to play with time).

Part I: Examining an example: "A Shirt Full of Bees"

Points to contemplate:

- a narrative tells a story
- a narrative has a point (aka - a thesis)
- a narrative focuses on key moments and quickly deals with necessary, but uninteresting information
- a narrative uses a consistent POV (1st or 3rd)
- a narrative is rich in detail (that is, important/significant/interesting detail)
- a narrative includes an interesting/creative introduction
- a narrative includes a conclusion that leaves the reader thinking
- a narrative essay includes several paragraphs that reflect on WHY the event described is important
 - How did you change? What did you learn? WHY is it significant?

Questions: (post answers on your wiki page)

What creative strategy does the author use to begin the story?

What is the point (or thesis) of the narrative?

What is 'the moment' on which the author focuses?

What events are not central to the story and 'disappear in the puff of a sentence'? (It's necessary information, but detail is not needed.)

What is the POV?

What are the key details in the story?

How does the author leave the reader thinking?

Part II: Prewriting (post on your wiki page)

List 5 events of significance in your life.

List 5 moments that last no more than 5 minutes where you had an aha or you didn't realize at the time the significance.

Choose two of those events and free write for 4-6 minutes about each of them.

Choose one of the events and add setting and dialogue.

“Stop it!” Lily shouted at her older brother.

Choose an event (either the ones you brainstormed with or another one) and answer the following questions:

What is the thesis?

What is the significance (one sentence)?

I learned that I should never handle sharp end objects in front of other people.

What is the setting?

The setting is mostly at my friends house, where the shocking event actually happened.

Write one sentence or phrase for each of the senses (taste, touch, smell. . .)

Smell: At last, when we opened the door, the sting of blood came tingling up our nose and we automatically winced at the sight of the stained stairs.

Hear: We stuck our ears on the door to hear what had happened to him.. at first there was complete silence and thought that aohsd had just finally give up.. but seconds later we could hear him. It started with a small, frightened voice. “mom....” Shreik of mothers,

Sight: It was like some sloppy person had spilled cranberry juice all over the floor.. but.. it wasn't cranberry juice.

Touch:

Taste:

Start writing.

Part III: Draft 1: (300 - 600 words)

Organization

Introduction -- (maybe)

- attention grabbing statement (dialogue, startling statement, question, quotation)
- introduce the focus of the paper - change or idea learned
- establish the narrative POV - 1st person
- thesis should be the last sentence of this paragraph

Body Paragraphs (or you could start in the middle of the story and then back up to an introductory line)

- begin telling the story (narrative) of change or idea learned
- include specific events that caused the change
- focus on showing not telling

Conclusion (might be several paragraphs)

- reflect on how you changed or what you learned
- explain WHY the change or idea learned is significant
- end with something for the reader to ponder

Make sure your narrative essay included the following:

- a narrative tells a story
- a narrative has a point (aka - a thesis)
- a narrative focuses on key moments and quickly deals with necessary, but uninteresting information
- a narrative uses a consistent POV (1st or 3rd)
- a narrative is rich in detail (that is, important/significant/interesting detail, plus use of the senses)
- a narrative includes an interesting/creative introduction
- a narrative includes a conclusion that leaves the reader thinking
- a narrative essay includes several paragraphs that reflect on WHY the event described is important
 - How did you change? What did you learn? WHY is it significant?