

Creative Writing - Personal Narrative Assignment

For this assignment, you will write a story about a real experience you've had and how it impacted you. The content of your narrative is your choice, but please note that **you must be prepared to share your story with the whole class**. A few guidelines:

- 1) Don't mistake drama for substance. Talented writers can make even the most mundane events interesting to read. Poor writers try to grab attention with flashy, unrealistic action.
- 2) Write about an experience you can actually remember. Your goal should be to create this experience for your reader.
- 3) Use specific, detailed language.
- 4) Give yourself time to plan, write, and revise. Don't expect perfection on your first try.
- 5) Include a combination of storytelling (what/when/where/how/who) and reflection (why) to create a full essay.
- 6) Be as honest as possible, but...
- 7) Use poetic license when necessary. For example, if you don't remember the exact color of the drapes in your grandmother's house, it's okay to guess. (But if your whole story is about how the color of those drapes made you want to become a decorator, consider telling a different story.)

Format: Typed, 12-point legible font, double spaced. Please print your paper.

Length: Don't exceed two pages. Seriously - I won't read after two pages. Be concise.

Deadline: Friday, September 4 at the beginning of class

Grading: Your final draft will be a summative (test) grade.

A writing tip from *The Elements of Style*:

“Write in a way that comes naturally. Write in a way that comes easily and naturally to you, using words and phrases that come readily to hand. But do not assume that because you have acted naturally your product is without flaw. The use of language begins with imitation. The infant imitates the sounds made by its parents; the child imitates first the spoken language, then the stuff of books. The imitative life continues long after the writer is secure in the language, for it is almost impossible to avoid imitating what one admires. Never imitate consciously, but do not worry about being an imitator; take pains instead to admire what is good. Then when you write in a way that comes naturally, you will echo the halloos that bear repeating.” (Strunk & White 70)

Disclaimer: If you write about an experience that involves you getting hurt, hurting others, or hurting yourself, I'm legally obligated to contact the appropriate authorities.