

Lesson 10: Narrative Essay Writing and Voice (2 Days)

☐ Getting Started

Sophie shares Bompie's stories with the crew of *The Wanderer*. She knows Bompie's stories because he shared them with her in the letters he sent to her. When you write about an experience you have had, it is called a personal narrative. In personal narratives, it is important for your writing to have a distinctive voice and for the experience you share to be understood by others.

Here are some pointers for using voice in a personal narrative:

- Make it personal and unique — express your personality.
- Don't just describe what happened; show (don't tell) your feelings about the events and people.
- Try to create a feeling or tone to your narrative — suspenseful, sad, funny

The following tips will help you make your personal narrative more effective:

- Put your reader in the action of your story and appeal to the reader's senses.
- Use dialogue in your narrative.
- Add interesting and important details.
- It's okay to add some embellishments. The experience you select is based on something that really did happen, but the details don't have to be entirely accurate. While you can add embellishment, try not to veer too far from the actual events.
- Describe what you learned from the experience or how it changed you.

Ideas to Think About

- How do events in our lives change us?
- How do the events of our lives affect our emotions?

Things to Know

- Narrative writing tells a story. A personal narrative tells about an event that happened to the writer.

Activities

☐ Part 1: Narrative Essay Rubric

Review the "Narrative Essay Rubric" before you begin. This rubric will describe the criteria that will be used to evaluate your essay.

☐ Part 2: Prewriting Narrative Organizer

Brainstorm some ideas for an event that has happened in your life that might make a good story. Think of something that was funny, scary, surprising, or depressing. Once you have at least three ideas, think about which one might most interest a reader. Fill out the "Personal Narrative Organizer" sheet. At the top of the organizer, briefly describe the experience you will write about. In the next three boxes, write about the three main events of the experience. At the bottom of each box, briefly show how the event made you feel. Finally, write at the bottom of the page how the experience changed you or what you learned from it.

☐ Part 3: First Draft

Before you start writing your first draft, think about the tone you want to set for the narrative. Is the event funny? Sad? Scary? Keep this tone in mind as you write.

In your first draft, write the story as it flows into your mind. Be sure to grab the reader's attention in the first couple of sentences. When you're ready to organize your draft, remember to include an introductory paragraph, body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph. Use your "Prewriting Narrative Organizer" to guide your writing.

Remember to engage the reader through action and words that appeal to the reader's senses - modifiers will help you achieve these goals. As you are writing, make sure you are showing how you feel, not just telling the reader

something. For example, instead of saying, "I was scared," you could say, "My knees were shaking and I felt frozen in time."

Day 2

☐ Part 4: Narrative Editing and Revision

Read over your draft. Look over each of the criterion on the rubric and check to see that you brought voice into your paper, selected words to make the story more interesting, and used correct spelling and punctuation.

The "Narrative Editing and Revision" page will help you edit your writing. Meet with a parent to conference about your writing. Discuss the rubric with him or her as it relates to your essay. Then go through the "Narrative Editing and Revision" page to help you determine what you need to edit in your story.

Changes you need to make may include showing more action or adding more description. You may need to correct spelling or punctuation in your essay. Refer to the *Handy Guide to Writing* for any grammar or punctuation rules you're not sure about.

Use a dictionary to check the spelling of words you may have spelled incorrectly.

☐ **Part 5: Final Copy**

Once you have edited and revised your rough draft, type your final copy on the computer. Be sure to double-space the text and indent your paragraphs. Share your personal narrative with your family.

Wrapping Up

In this lesson, you practiced writing a personal narrative. What did you think was the most challenging part of writing a personal narrative? What did you enjoy most about writing your personal narrative? Did your readers enjoy reading your narrative?

Review the Narrative Essay Rubric before you begin. This rubric will describe the criteria that will be used to score your essay.

NARRATIVE ESSAY RUBRIC

SCALE

- 1 = Does Not Meet Expectations
- 2 = Partially Meets Expectations
- 3 = Meets expectations
- 4 = Exceeds expectations

	1	2	3	4
VOICES				
Did you show how you felt at different points in the narrative?				
Did your narrative have an identifiable tone?				
Did the narrative reflect a personality behind it?				
WORD CHOICE				
Did you describe action and include some dialogue (if appropriate) in your narrative?				
Did your language appeal to the reader's senses?				
MECHANICS				
Did you use ending punctuation correctly?				
Did you capitalize the beginnings of sentences and proper nouns?				
Did you use commas and apostrophes when needed?				
Are the words in your essay spelled correctly?				

Pre-writing Narrative Organizer

Brief description of the experience: _____

Who: _____

When: _____

Where: _____

Event 1

Event 2

Event 3

How I felt:

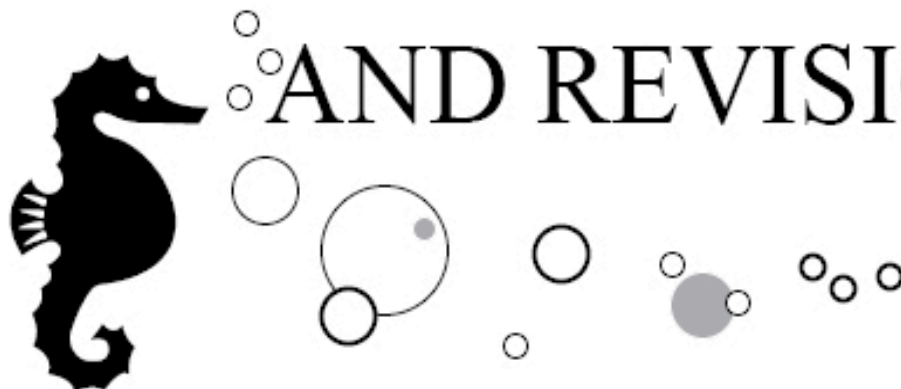
How I felt:

How I felt:

What I learned or how I was changed: _____



EDITING NARRATIVE AND REVISIONS



	YES	NO
At the beginning of the essay, did you describe the event and grab the attention of the reader?		
Have you clearly explained <i>who</i> was involved and <i>when</i> and <i>where</i> the incident occurred?		
Are your events in chronological order?		
Have you used precise descriptive details to make your narrative interesting and convincing?		
Have you used dialogue to report important conversations?		
Did you show how you felt at different points in the essay?		
At the end, did you reflect on what you learned or how you were changed by the event?		
Does the essay have a clear tone?		
Are words spelled correctly and capitalized when they should be?		
Did you use punctuation correctly? (Refer to your "Handy Guide to Grammar and Writing" to remember your punctuation rules.)		

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Getting Started

✿ Ideas to Think About

- How do events in our lives change us?
- How do the events of our lives affect our emotions?

Things to Know

- Narrative writing tells a story. A personal narrative tells about an event that happened to the writer.

⦿ Skills

- Explain relationships that are causal. (LA)
- Produce final drafts that demonstrate accurate spelling and the correct use of punctuation and capitalization. (LA)
- Narrate an expressive account (e.g., fictional or autobiographical) that uses a coherent organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience, and context; tells a story or establishes the significance of an event or events; and uses remembered feelings and specific details. (LA)
- Uses a range of appropriate strategies (e.g., dialogue, suspense, movement, gestures, expressions). (LA)

Introducing the Lesson

Discuss that a narrative essay is one where the writer tells a personal story. In a narrative essay, the writer does not just list the events of the event in order, but includes his emotions and creates a tone for the essay. The tone of the essay may be humorous, suspenseful, sad, etc. In a narrative, the writer reveals how the event changed him or what he learned from the event. The narrator creates a distinctive voice for the piece and attempts to put the reader in the action of the story.

Activities

Part 1: Narrative Essay Rubric

Review the rubric with your child. Check that he understands the criteria for the narrative writing assignment.

Part 2: Prewriting Narrative Organizer

Check your child's organizer and discuss his ideas for the paragraphs.

Part 3: First Draft

Your child will write his first draft today.

Day 2**Part 4: Narrative Editing and Revision**

Conference with your child as you review his paper. Discuss any words he may need to check the spelling of and any grammar rules that might need to be reviewed. If he did not correctly use a comma, apostrophe, or other punctuation mark, review the rule(s) from the *Handy Guide to Writing*. Discuss any criteria from the rubric he needs to improve.

Part 5: Final Copy

Evaluate your child's final copy using the rubric and provide points for the criteria on the rubric. You may choose to add up the points and divide by the total possible points to get a percentage grade for the paper. Percentages can be converted to letter grades. Some parents provide a grade, while others may not want to put a formal letter or number grade on assignments. This is a parent's personal decision. For some children, a grade may be motivating while for others it may be stressful and not helpful.

Encourage your child to type his final copy on the computer. If he does not know how to type, encourage him to use online keyboarding tools and games to strengthen this skill.

Wrapping Up**Questions to Discuss**

- What is a narrative essay? (It is an essay where the writer tells a personal story.)
- What did you find most challenging about this assignment? Most enjoyable?
- Overall, were you pleased with your narrative essay? Why or why not?

Things to Review

Review the steps in the writing process — prewriting (organizing ideas), rough draft, editing and revision, final copy.