

Personal Narrative

APSU Writing Center Handout

A personal narrative tells a story about a real-life event that had a significant impact on you. It's usually written in first person and highlights a transformative experience, your struggles, and the lessons learned.

Narrative Storytelling Tips

Use first-person pronouns (I, me, my).

Focus on personal experiences, including challenges, triumphs, and hopes.

Include vivid sensory details (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste).

Follow your instructor's word count and prompts.

Writing a Personal Narrative

Introduction

Set the scene and provide background.

Introduce key characters and your initial feelings.

Keep details broad to build interest.

The Story

Describe the events in detail.

Show emotions through actions and dialogue.

Reflection and Analysis

Explain what you learned from the experience.

Discuss how it changed you or shaped your perspective.

Conclusion

Summarize the significance of the event.

Reflect on why this memory matters and what it taught you.

Questions to Guide Your Narrative

Who are key characters? Who influenced you?

What happened? Central event or turning point? Theme or message?

When did it happen? When did you understand the lesson?

Where did it occur? Where did the story reach its climax?

Why did it happen? Why is it significant? Why share it?

Introduction: Introduce topic, give background, state thesis.

Paragraph 1: Describe situation, key details (location, people, emotions).

Paragraph 2: Describe the event by including sensory details, highlighting the key moment.

Paragraph 3: Reflect on your feelings and how they evolve; connect to life lessons.

Conclusion: Summarize what you learned, tie back to thesis, end with a final reflection.

References

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