



Literacy Narrative Guidelines

Format & Submission

Citation Style: MLA, APA, or CMS.

Length: 4-5 pages double-spaced, standard font.

Sources: No external sources required.

Submission: Upload to Blackboard/Google Classroom Assignment Dropbox.

Due Dates

Friday Feb 7 for proposal.

Monday Feb 16 for Peer Review.

Friday Feb 25 to Instructor for Feedback.

Resources

- Purdue OWL
- Chapters on Research Writing from U Should B Writing
<http://bcray6.wixsite.com/ushouldbwriting>
- Course Website (for brainstorming tips, rubric, and suggestions)
- Example narratives by Richard Rodriguez, Malcolm X, and others.

Purpose

For this paper, you'll write a narrative about an issue in education, language, or literacy of your choosing. Stories often work as powerful and persuasive ways of making arguments. They give you the opportunity to mobilize your own experiences, memories, and observations as evidence. Many genres use narrative as a way of explaining new ideas so that audiences can understand them.

Requirements

Introduction: You should introduce your main topic here, either by stating it directly or opening with an anecdote or observation that conveys your main focus. Within the first two paragraphs, audiences should understand the main point you're conveying.

Main Body: Here, you'll build your narrative. You can either describe one significant experience and its significance, or stitch together a number of moments from your life. As you write, try to balance narration, description, and reflection. Include discussion of how the various events made you feel, but also what they showed you about your topic. Some moments reveal a problem you think needs to be fixed, or reveal a life lesson that people could benefit from. Finally, try to discuss how your outlook or opinions have changed as a result of your experience, but also thinking about it from a distance.

Conclusion: The conclusion should recap your narrative and its importance. Here, you'll drive home what you want readers to take away from your story.

Tips & Suggestions

- Spend time brainstorming and freewriting about events in your life that seem important.
- Reflect on why these moments matter. What do they mean to you, and what could they mean to other people?
- Compelling narratives can arise from moments where you thought were were treated unfairly, underestimated, or not listened to.
- You can also think about struggles or obstacles that you, or someone you know, overcame.
- Consider whether these experiences showed you a problem or gap in ways we think about learning, writing, or communication.
- You might have also learned life lessons, or gained insight that could be helpful to other people.
- Break your writing up into stages. You might only brainstorm for a few days in a notebook or Word Document. After that, you can write in stages. One day, you'll just establish your main narrative. Another day, you'll try to add reflection. After that, you can devote days to polishing your introduction and conclusion, and so on.