

Personal Narrative

Minimum 600 words (no limit)

MLA format (Times New Roman, 12 pt., double-spaced, header in top left of page, title centered)

A Personal Narrative is a true story told well. The structure of a personal narrative is a mixture of an academic essay and Freytag's Pyramid. That means your **introduction** won't have a thesis statement; rather, the intro serves as context for setting up the story you're about to tell. It is a diving board rather than a road map.

Your **body paragraphs** will unfold in some sort of order, such as chronological, methodical, or practical. **You want details to unfold naturally so the reader can follow your train of thought.** Also, try to create tension. This doesn't mean people have to be fighting with one another. Tension can mean strong emotion. It can be you wrestling with a decision or trying to achieve some sort of goal. Include scenarios that prompt the reader to feel something.

The **conclusion** will not be a summary or recap of what you've already written. Instead, this is where you share **Reflection**. Include personal thoughts on whatever you're writing about. Perhaps explain a lesson you've learned or how an event impacted you. Take some time to examine why you chose a particular topic.

Topic Ideas

- Early childhood memories
- First experiences
- Dreams, hopes, goals
- Risks you've taken
- Fears, real or imagined
- Hobbies and passions
- Confrontations that led to life lessons
- Obstacles you've overcome
- Important people (and animals) in your life
- Favorite adventures or accomplishments

Before turning it in, endeavor to answer these questions:

- Did I fully explain what happened? (including who, when, where, and how)
- Did I fully examine how this event impacted me?
- Am I still processing what I've learned?
- Have I chosen descriptive language over generic words and phrases?
- Does the story flow smoothly from one paragraph to the next?
- Have I run a spell-check or tended to any grammatical errors?
- Have I given this story a title?

Outline due in class on Monday, November 8.

Rough draft due via Google Docs on Friday, November 15.

Final due in class on Monday, November 22.