

Memoir Writing Assignment

Directions: Your task is to write a piece that can be classified as a memoir. Use the mentor texts and activities that we have done to help you choose a style and topic. Remember: the purpose of writing a memoir is to share an experience based on what you remember and to reflect on your thoughts, feelings, observations, etc. along the way. Try to focus on one important moment.

Due date: Last day of class--Thursday 1/18

Helpful Tips:

- Consider one of the most influential experiences/relationships in your life, or a memory that you can recall vividly. There must be a distinct purpose or moral of your story by the end.
- Your memoir may be about something or someone who taught you a lesson or helped you see the world in a new light. Whatever topic you choose to write about, make sure to focus in on a small moment/experience frozen in time without giving too many unnecessary details that are unrelated to the story.
- Find your voice in writing your memoir! Decide whether you will use flashbacks or anecdotes to reveal important details in your story. Challenge yourself to start your memoir in the middle of a particular moment instead of just “telling” what happened. You can even start by telling the reader how you were feeling before a particular experience took place.
- Make your story come alive! Use vivid details, figurative language--metaphors, similes, hyperbole (exaggerated speech), dialogue, and internal thoughts (what you are thinking/feeling in a particular experience).



Modeled off of the assignment and rubric from:

Izzo. "Memoir Writing Assignment." *Lakeland School Corporation*, West Corporation,
www.lakeland.k12.nj.us/cms/lib/.../153/Memoir%20Writing%20Rubric.doc.

Memoir Writing Rubric

Criteria	Excellent	Proficient	Nearing Proficiency	Developing/Needs Work
Memorable moment and emotionality of the experience: 10	Memoir focuses on a single moment or relationship that is clearly significant to the author's life.	Memoir focuses on a single moment or relationship that seems somewhat significant to the author's life.	Memoir focuses on a single moment or relationship that does not seem significant to the author's life.	Author does not seem to be aware of the significance of the moment or relationship.
Structure -Events before (<i>flashbacks, back story, etc.</i>): 15	Author clearly "shows" attitudes and feelings numerous times through the thoughts, action and dialogue of the characters.	Author's attitudes and feelings before are evident & occur numerous times through the thoughts and actions of the character.	Direct statements indicate the author's feelings and attitudes and/or some events are not necessarily significant.	Memoir includes irrelevant events that cause the reader confusion in trying to determine the <i>before</i> feelings and attitudes.
Structure - Events after (reflection)- <i>Is there a revelation or reflection piece that shows how the writer's experience affected him/her?:</i> 15	The memoir clearly "shows" how the learning changed the author's life.	Although word choice does not always "show," it is clear to the reader how the learning changed the author's life.	Change is evident, but is "told" to the reader through direct statements.	Memoir includes irrelevant events that cause confusion when noticing the change in the author's life.
Style & Technique- Is the story-telling captivating? Are there sensory details? Is there imagery? Does the writer take risks? Is there dialogue that makes the story seem personal and real?: 15	Author consistently "shows" the significance of the events through engaging details, compelling language, and a balance of action, thoughts, and dialogue.	Author sometimes "shows" the significance of the events through details, compelling language, and a balance of action, thoughts, and dialogue.	Author "tells" the significance of the events through direct statements.	No effort is made to reveal the significance of the events to the reader.
Grammar Conventions and organization of ideas: 5	Memoir is error-free. Piece flows naturally in a logical fashion.	Memoir contains minimal mistakes that do not interfere with meaning. Piece flows naturally.	Numerous minor errors often make memoir difficult to read. Some lapses in organization.	Many errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation often interfere with meaning.

Total: _____/60