

Narrative Essay 1

The narrative essay offers writers a chance to think and write about themselves, to explain how their experiences lead to some important realization or conclusion about their lives or about the world in general. Each of us has memories of times that have been meaningful, of times that have taught us lessons about ourselves or others. Through the narrative essay, we have the chance to record those experiences as the supporting evidence to substantiate our new understanding.

A crucial step in planning a narrative essay is selecting an incident worthy of writing about and finding the central, relevant, salient point in that incident. To do this, writers might ask themselves what about the incident provided new insights or awareness primarily for themselves (but possibly for others too). Finally, writers incorporate details which make the incident real for readers.

Compose a two (2) page narrative essay on one of the following topics. Remember to explain and substantiate (verify) the new understanding.

1. [The Good and the Bad] Think about an event in your life that seemed bad but turned out to be good. Maybe you got injured and while you were waiting for your broken leg to heal, you learned how to use a computer. What makes the event change from bad to good may be something that you learned as a result, something that you did differently as a result, or something that happened that wouldn't have occurred otherwise. Tell the story of the event that you experienced and help your readers understand how an event that seemed negative turned out to have valuable consequences.
2. [Standing Up] Choose a time when you did something that took a lot of nerve, a time when you didn't follow the crowd or a time when you stood up for your beliefs. Perhaps your friends were urging you to do something that you were uncomfortable with and you chose not to cave into peer pressure. Maybe you took a stance on a political issue that was important in your community. Whatever you choose, think about the details of the event and write a story that tells about what happened. Your narrative should show your readers why you decided to make a stand or try something that took nerve, give specifics on the events, and share how you felt after the event.
3. [Changing Places] Every place has things that change -- sometimes as the result of economics, sometimes because different people are involved, and sometimes for no clear reason that you know about. Think of a change to a place that you know well. Perhaps the local grocery store you grew up with as Smith and Bros. Grocery was bought out by a regional chain like Food Lion or Winn Dixie. Maybe the First National Bank of Smithburg suddenly becomes NationsBank. Perhaps the change was more personal -- an older sibling moves out of the house and your family changes the room to a guest room or an office. Think of a specific change and narrate the events that occurred. Readers should know the details of the change, and they should know how you feel about the changes that occurred.