

Elementary Personal Narrative Writing Packet 2012-2013

The purpose of this packet is to provide support for guiding 2nd-4th grade students through the process of writing personal narrative stories.

Personal narrative writing is when you write about an experience from your own life in a way that will grab the reader's attention. It is written in first person, using pronouns such as *I, me, my, we, our...* all through your story. Imagine that you are sharing your story with someone who wasn't there when it happened. Organize your story with a beginning, middle, and end so that your story is clear. Give details to tell more about each idea. In the end, you should explain why this topic was meaningful or special.

Some ideas for personal narrative writing:

- write in a personal **journal/diary** (start one if you haven't already)
- write about a **place** you've visited
- write about an **event** in your life such as: a vacation, finding or losing something, a fun day, a bad day, a birthday celebration, a holiday memory...
- write **letters** to someone telling what you've been doing

Edit Checklist:

Write a + **when** you've done each one to your rough draft. Now you're ready to write or type your final copy! Write neatly.

- ___ wrote my name and the date
- ___ centered my title on the top line
- ___ indented paragraphs (final copy)
- ___ read **out loud**: Did it sound right?
- ___ added details & descriptive words
- ___ used pronouns such as: I, me, my, we, our...
- ___ ideas are in order beginning/middle/end
- ___ read/ circled/ & **fixed** misspelled words
- ___ read/**fixed** capitals & punctuation
- ___ read my paper to someone

Break up a writing assignment. Don't cram it all into one day! For example:

Day 1: Read a book of your choice or refer to the books listed in this packet. Brainstorm together something your child could write about from personal experience. Each child fills out a graphic organizer independently or with an adult.

Day 2: Read what you wrote yesterday and then write the 1st half of your story. You may want to start your story with: *I remember when...*

Day 3: Read what you've already written and then write the 2nd half of your story.

Day 4: Use edit checklist independently or guided by an adult to fix mistakes.

Day 5: Write or type a final copy. Share it!

Students don't need to fill out a graphic organizer for journal writing. Also, I don't recommend adult editing of a student's personal journal. Allow your child to do this on his/her own.

Most of all remember to HAVE FUN writing!

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Books that Model Personal Narrative Writing:

(Not all of these books are true stories, but encourage your child to write a true story from his/her life.)

1. Knots on a Counting Rope (AR 2.0)
2. When I was Five (AR 2.1)
3. Smoky Night (AR 2.4)
4. The Birthday Letters (AR 2.5)
5. A Chair for my Mother (AR 2.5)
6. Miss Rumphius (AR 2.8)
7. My Grrreat Uncle Tiger (AR 2.8)
8. More than Anything Else (AR 3.3)
9. The Stories Julian Tells (AR 3.4)
10. The Night I followed My Dog (AR 3.4)
11. Alexander who is Not (Do You Hear Me? I Mean It) Going to Move (AR 3.5)
12. Alexander and the Terrible Horrible No Good Very Bad Day (AR 3.5)
13. Mailing May (AR 3.6)
14. The Gardener (AR 3.9) *letter writing*
15. A Fourth of July on the Plains (AR 4.0, on the Oregon Trail 1852)
16. Tree of Cranes (AR 4.4)
17. When I Was Young in the Mountains (AR 4.8)
18. Fish Fry (no AR, 2.8 reading level)

**Author, Tomie De Paola, has written many stories from his childhood. Not all of them are written in first person, but they are about his life: The Art Lesson (3.6), On My Way (3.9), Here we All Are (4.1)*

Writing Ideas/Suggestions for each Book:

1. *Ask a parent about what happened when you were born or how you got your name and write about it.*
2. *Compare what you liked to do when you were five with what you like to do now **or** make a timeline of your life.*
3. *Write about a time when you experienced something scary or dangerous.*
4. *Write about one of your birthday parties or write a letter to someone you know.*
5. *Write about a time when you or your family saved to buy something special. How did you earn the money?*
6. *Write three things you want to do when you grow up*
7. *Write about a time you visited the zoo*
8. *Write about something new that you would REALLY like to learn and tell why.*
9. *Write about a time when you had an experience like Julian.*
10. *Write about something silly your pet has done.*
11. *Have you ever had to move away from your friends? If so, write about what happened and how you felt.*
12. *Write about a terrible day you have had **or** write about a really good day you've experienced.*
13. *Write about an unusual trip you have taken and tell what happened along the way.*
14. *Write a letter to someone telling what you've been doing **or** write about your own garden.*
15. *Write what you did to celebrate the Fourth of July **or** write about another favorite holiday and how you celebrated it.*
16. *Write about a time you learned something new about another country's celebrations.*
17. *Write about a time when you visited the mountains **or** had an experience like the author.*
18. *Write about a time you went fishing or had a picnic.*

Name: _____ Date: _____

Personal Narrative Story Organizer/Rough Draft

Fill in this organizer with information about the experience that you plan to write about.

(title)

I remember when... _____

Details: 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

How it ended (What did I think and feel?)

(2nd grade example from Scholastic) Sheba's Big Day

I remember when we were on vacation visiting Grandma on a rainy day last summer. It was great, because her cat, Sheba, had her kittens the day we got there!

Sheba was acting strange. She was pacing and walking in circles. Dad helped her by building a bed of rags. That afternoon, she had seven adorable kittens. We named the last one Tippy, because the tip of her tail was white.

Grandma kept Tippy and gave the rest of the kittens away. I can't wait to visit Grandma again. I wonder if Tippy will have kittens someday.