

DORANTES

ESSAY

Narrative

English 101--Descriptive Narrative

Choose ONE of the options

1
101

Write a three-page paper (typed, double-spaced) based on your option.

The first draft is due Monday, Jan. 30 on the Discussion Board. Please copy and paste into discussion. No attachments, please.

The final is due Wednesday, Feb. 8 by 11:59 p.m. via turnitin.com. Use a Word file attachment or an RTF attachment.

Remember to see a Writing Tutor after you have written your first draft and before you submit your final draft. Ten points will be deducted if you don't see a writing tutor in the Writing Lab. This deduction will not appear until about two weeks after you have received a grade and your paper back.

If you are not finished with your paper by Feb. 8, you have until Wednesday, Feb. 15 for LATE submission. Late papers will be read last and will lose five points.

Be sure to check the Modules, Writing a Narrative, Description Basics, and Checking Your Narrative to fulfill some special requirements of this assignment.

1) Peer Pressure: In both "Shooting an Elephant" by George Orwell and "Salvation" by Langston Hughes, the authors use dialogue and description to discuss an incident in which they succumbed to peer pressure. Do you have a significant event in your life in which you succumbed to peer pressure? Write a narrative essay recounting this incident. Begin with a dramatic moment in your story, using vivid description in your introduction. Then flash back and describe the background of your story and proceed in chronological order. Be sure to use dialogue and description throughout your story.

2) Parental Approval: Sandra Cisneros writes how she finally gained her father's approval. Have you had some incident which earned you the respect of one or two parents? Have your parents had exceedingly high expectations for their sons and daughters? Write a narrative essay recounting how you gained one or two parents' approval. Begin with a dramatic event in your story, using vivid description in your introduction. Then flash back and recount the background of your story and proceed in chronological order. Continue using dialogue and description throughout your essay.

3) Mistreatment by Someone in Authority: Harriet Jacobs writes about her experience in which she was mistreated by someone who had authority over her and acted inappropriately. Have you ever been treated unjustly by someone in authority? How did you react? Write a narrative essay in which you recount the situation and your responses to it. Begin with a dramatic event in your story, using vivid description in your introduction. Then flash back and recount the background of your story and proceed in chronological order. Continue using dialogue and description throughout your essay.

NARRATION

Narrative essays tell a story by presenting events in an orderly sequence.

Usually narratives are written chronologically, but they may have introductions or endings that are out of sequence. For instance, for this essay, students will be asked to begin the narrative with the most dramatic moment of their essay.

Narratives need rich, specific detail. Each detail should help create a picture for the reader.

FIRST STEP:

Read the list of possible topics and find one for which you can build some rich detail. You will need to write three pages on your topic, so be sure you choose wisely.

SECOND STEP:

Brainstorm in notes what you can remember about the incident. Try to write about 30 things down. Do not write in complete sentences, and you need not proceed in order.

THIRD STEP:

Develop specific detail.

How to develop detail:

- 1) Think of the five senses. How did the moment feel, taste, sound, look like, and/or smell?
- 2) Think of "when." When did something happen. In subsequent events, how long after did they happen. How old were you when something happened? Think of duration and sequence. Be sure there's some reference to your age at the time of the event.
- 3) Think of dialog. What did you say? What did other people say? You may not remember exactly, but you need to use at least two direct quotations of things people said to you or about you, or what you said to or about someone else.
- 4) Think of your thoughts at the time.
- 5) Think of "where" and place. Where did the events take place? What did the place look like? What did the place feel like? Use your other senses.
- 6) Think of active verbs. Anytime you have written the verb "to be" (am, is, are, was, were) you are not using an active verb. Sometimes this can't be helped, but often, with a little thought, you can put a lot more action into your writing by using active verbs.

FOURTH STEP:

Think of the most dramatic moment of your story. This will become the first sentence of your narrative. In the rest of the first paragraph, you should discuss the dilemma or situation you are in and then remember back to how it all started.

The second paragraph will be the chronological beginning of your story. Now proceed chronologically, using the various details that you've developed about your story.

Grading Rubric--Descriptive Narrative

	20 points	10 points	Zero points	Score
Introduction	Introduction was vibrant. The essay began with the most dramatic moment of the narrative. The student used vivid and descriptive language.	Introduction was adequate. The essay began with the most dramatic moment of the narrative, but the description and language was lackluster.	The essay did not begin with a dramatic moment.	
Sentence Structure	There were no errors in sentence structure. There were no fragments, comma splices, run-on, or garbled sentences.	Sentence structure was adequate. There were only one or two errors of fragments, comma splices, run-on, or garbled sentences.	There were three or more errors of fragments, comma splices, run-on, or garbled sentences.	
Verb usage	There were no errors in the verb usage. Verb tense was consistent and appropriate.	There were one or two errors in verb usage or verb tense.	There were three or more errors in verb usage or verb tense.	
Descriptive language, diction, use of quotations, punctuation, general quality	The body of the essay contained descriptive language that made the narrative come to life. The essay used excellent description in at least one section of "Show, Don't Tell." The essay showed a good grasp of punctuation, and the overall quality of the essay was good.	The body of the essay contained some descriptive language although there could have been more. The essay used at least one section of "Show, Don't Tell." There may be an error or two in word choice. At least one dramatic quotation was used. There were a few punctuation errors. The overall quality of the essay was adequate.	The body of the essay was not very descriptive. No quotations were used. There were several word choice errors. Punctuation was weak. The overall quality of the essay was poor.	

Grade:

Check here to see that you've followed the requirements for this essay:

- 1) Is your essay typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman font 12?
- 2) In the top left corner of page 1, did you use and double-space the following heading style?

Name

Essay Name (Narrative, etc.)

English 101—Instructor Kathleen Dorantes

Date

- 3) Is the first sentence of your essay the most dramatic, specific moment of your story?
- 4) Does the chronological sequence of your story begin with paragraph #2?
- 5) Is your paper three pages long? It needs to be at least 2.75 pages and at the most 3.5 pages.
- 6) Do you use transitions between your paragraphs and between many of your sentences? See transition list to add these.
- 7) Do you use specific and rich detail? Have you appealed to your senses and described these in your essay? Do you use active verbs instead of forms of the verb "to be" (am, is, are, was, were)?
- 8) Have you proofread your work? Be sure to spell check AND proofread.
- 9) Are you sure there are no fragments, comma splices or run ons in your essay?
- 10) Did you use at least two quotations that people said to you during the incident you are describing or things that you said to someone else?
- 11) Did you use correct punctuation with your quotations? See the module on punctuating quotations.
- 12) Have you scheduled an appointment with the writing tutor at the writing lab? (355-6391)

Why use direct quotations in a narrative?

Direct quotations give immediacy to narratives. They make the text more alive. For instance, look at the following two examples of the same moment in a narrative. Which is more immediate and dramatic for the reader?

Example A:

My father shouted at me to look out. I looked up, and I saw a huge boat speeding straight for me. I screamed an obscenity and frantically started swimming.

Example B:

"Look out!" my father shouted. I looked up, and I saw a huge boat speeding straight for me. "Shit!" I screamed and frantically started swimming.

Punctuation with Quotations

Usually in academic writing, you will use first and last name of the person you are quoting on first reference and only the last name in subsequent references. The verbs are usually in present tense.

When F. Scott Fitzgerald tells Ernest Hemingway that the rich are different, Hemingway replies, "Yes. They have more money."

The attribution (he says, she writes, etc.) can come at the beginning, middle, or end of a quote.

Example of attribution at the beginning:

Firefighter Joe McGreevey says, *"Being part of a group makes you feel like you have a second family."*

Example of attribution in the middle of a complete sentence:

"Being part of a group," **firefighter Joe McGreevey says**, *"makes you feel like you have a second family."*

Example of attribution coming in the middle between two complete sentences:

"Being part of a group makes you feel like you have a second family," **says firefighter Joe McGreevey.** *"We become that close."*

Example of attribution at the end:

"Being part of a group makes you feel like you have a second family," **firefighter Joe McGreevey says.**

Notice the punctuation in the four examples.

Sometimes you may wish to paraphrase what someone told you. Notice the punctuation in the indirect quotation.

McGreevey said that his fellow firefighters are like a family to him.