From *TEACHING MEMOIR IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM: A Genre Study Approach* by Tara Gibney

"Memoir can be an accessible genre for all students because everyone has a story to tell" (244).

Notes:

Why memoir?
-Teacher must be guided by the needs and interests of her students *at that time*.
-Memoir is powerful because it helps connect our individual, unique experiences.
    -This develops writing communities.

Teaching memoir
-Have some experience with writing a memoir before teaching it, but continue to learn with students as you go.
-Workshop model: begin with minilesson in which an issue is raised, move to demonstrating a skill or strategy, then focus students on a writer's technique. Finish with individual conferences.
-Immerse students in the genre: they need to read it in order to write it.
-Begin unit by defining and classifying memoir.
-Effective minilessons are crucial: focus on hooks and titles, sensory details, "shape" or form/ structure, conclusion.
-Brainstorming is very important, but can sometimes be met with pushback–come up with strategies to get their brains moving; such as, "Who Am I?" Charts.
-Encourage planning, but be weary of overemphasizing it.

Classroom format when teaching memoir
-Importance of choice in choosing a topic to write about in the form of the genre.
-Must create a safe, supportive writing environment first because memoir starts with honesty; vulnerability.
-Discuss the risks that need to be taken in order to write the best memoir you can.