



narrative writing Tell Your Story



Essential Questions:	<i>How do I develop my own personal story into a piece of narrative writing?</i>
Outcomes	Participants will be able to: • Analyze personal narratives in order to analyze their own writing more effectively. • Use prompts and templates to plan their narratives. • Use the writing process to tell their stories. • Write their personal narratives in story format.
Standards Benchmarks identified in RED are priority benchmarks.	R.2.2. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension. b. Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings. W.2.3. Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure. (W.2.3) W.3.3. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.5.4) W.2.5. With guidance and support from peers and others, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 at this level.) (W.3.5) W.2.6. With guidance and support, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others. (W.3.6)

TEACHERS: this content was designed for ABE/ASE students. Instructional scaffolding used in this lesson can be beneficial for multilingual students.

Because adult classrooms are multi-level, teachers will want to differentiate this HyperDoc by accommodating the different ways that students learn by using scaffolding strategies and appropriate leveled materials. Teachers will want to vary the instructional activities based on their student's needed skills.

For more information about collaborating and sharing on Google Drive, check out videos 36-45: [Google Junior Training series - YouTube](#).

STUDENTS: Before you begin this lesson



- Go to File > Make a copy
- Change the name to: <your name> Narrative Writing
- Begin working in your document
- When completing an activity, make a copy of the document and save with your name and the title of the activity

Be sure to read carefully. The green text is a prompt for reflection or activity.

ENGAGE WITH MODELS OF NARRATIVE WRITING

Click on the image below to hear *Beginnings 25* author Cathy Rias tell her story through narrative writing:



Click on the image below to hear Storyteller Lyn Ford read a poem written by a GED graduate:



The two recordings that you just listened to are narrative pieces written by Aspire students just like you. The first one is a video of a Cleveland Aspire student Cathy Rias. The second recording is storyteller Lyn Ford reading a poem written by a GED graduate.

After you listen to the two recordings, answer the following questions in the box below:

Write what held your interest? What made a connection with you? Why and how did the writing work?

Write down any ideas the stories inspired for your own story. Use this [Writing Ideas](#) document.

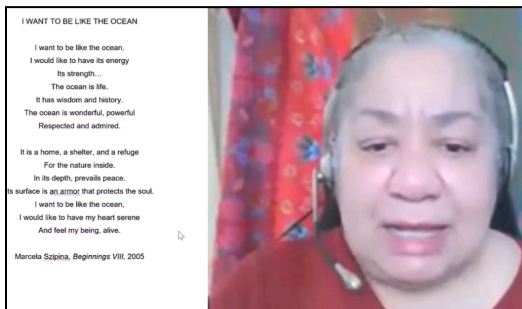
The quote below talks about personal stories and narrative writing.

Read the quote more than once to really connect with the ideas:

"The ability to see our lives as stories and share those stories with others is at the core of what it means to be human. We use stories to order and make sense of our lives, to define who we are, even to construct our realities: this happened, then this happened, then this. I was, I am, I will be. We recount our dreams, narrate our days and organize our memories into stories we tell others and ourselves. As natural-born storytellers, we respond to others' stories because they are deeply, intimately familiar."

— John Capecchi and Timothy Cage, authors of *Living Proof: Telling Your Story to Make a Difference* (advocacy for people and causes)

Click on the image below to do an activity with Storyteller Lyn Ford:



(3:46)

Read the piece [Palm Tree Leaf Story](#) silently to yourself, then read it out loud. As you read, listen for how the words and sentences sound.

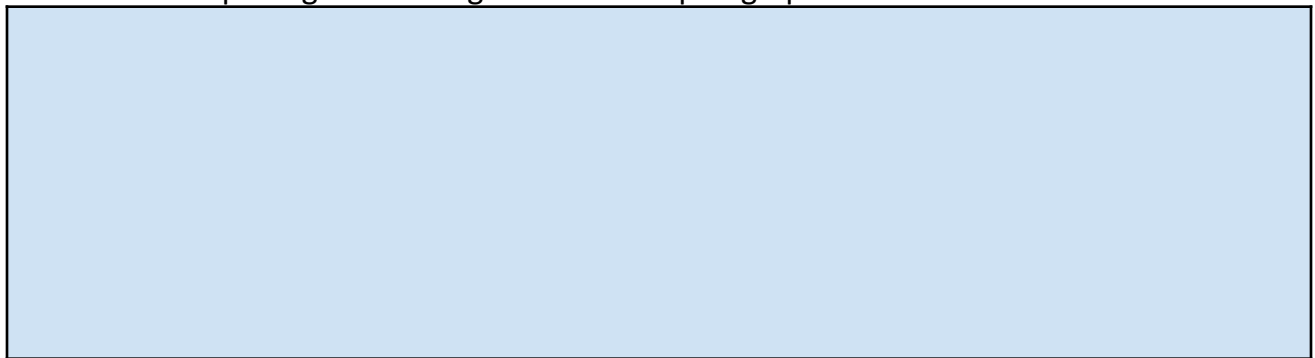
Is there a rhythm to the story?

Narrative writing is writing you do from your life, like a mini autobiography, but instead of writing about your whole life, you write about a small part of it.

The Palm Tree Leaf story is a good example of how you can select a small portion of your life to write about. **Write some ideas** for your own story that are “snapshots” of your life on the [Writing Ideas](#) document.

In the box below, **write what you noticed** about the poem and the story. **Then answer the following questions:**

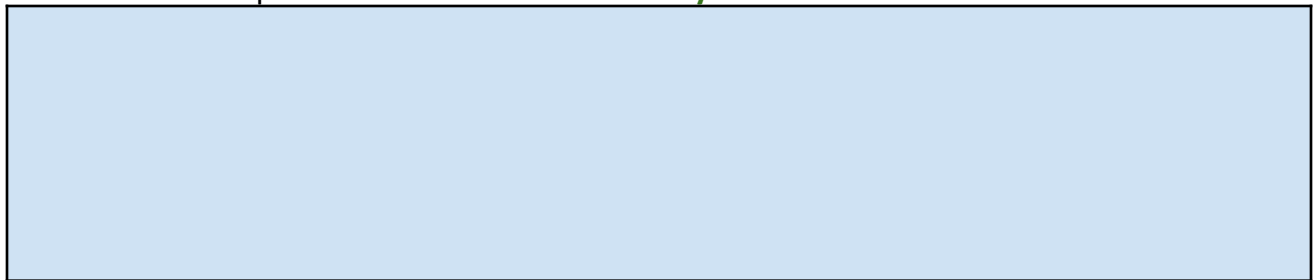
- What storytelling tools do you think the narrator used best?
 - Descriptive words and phrases.
 - Sentence structures, pauses and punctuation.
 - Visual and other sensory imagery.
 - Opening and closing sentences or paragraphs or verses.



Open [Beginnings Books](#) to see all the past volumes of the student publication *Beginnings*.

Choose one edition from the list, then scroll through the stories, picking one or two to read. In the box below, write how or if the stories connected with you.

How did the authors use words and sentences to tell their stories effectively? Did the stories tell about a small part of the author’s life? **Write your answers in the box below:**



EXPLORE WRITING TEMPLATES AND PROMPTS

You have seen and heard some examples of good narrative writing. Now it's time to get some of your own ideas on paper and organize them!



Let's try a quilt square writing activity!

1. Print out the [Quilting instructions and square templates](#)
2. Listen to [Storyteller Lyn Ford explain the quilt exercise](#) and complete the assignment given
3. Listen to [Tamica](#) read her quilt squares
4. Listen to [Yusra](#) read her quilt squares

Other tools to help you get started:

[Things that fit inside a heart](#)

[Draw your house](#)

[Scar map](#)

[The Storymatic](#)

[String of Pearls](#) and [Pearls workspace](#)

(String of Pearls has two parts, the explanation and a separate document, the workspace, to use for writing your ideas.)

Suggestion: Use Things That Fit Inside A Heart, Draw Your House, and the Scar Map to get ideas for your narrative. Use Quilting and String of Pearls to organize those ideas.

If you are stuck for ideas, **take a look at some [universal themes](#) for narrative writing.**



More Prompts!

It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words.

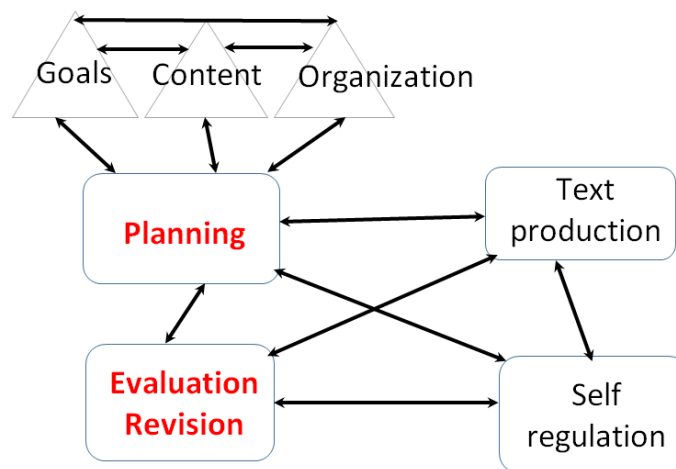
Follow this [link](#) to several pictures that might spark some ideas for your writing. You can use these pictures to write a true story, or you can use them to write a piece of fiction based on your own life. Explore all the categories of pictures. You never know what you'll find.

Choose 5 of the pictures that sparked some ideas and write for 3 minutes on each of those pictures. Don't worry about complete sentences, spelling or grammar. The important thing here is to get your ideas down on paper. Here's a [document](#) for you to do that.

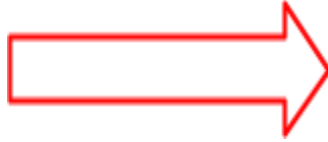
Now that you've used picture, or visual, prompts, this [link](#) will take you to a list of words and phrases that you might want to use as prompts. Choose three of the word prompts and write for five minutes on each one on this [document](#).

EXPLAIN THE WRITING PROCESS

The first thing you should know about the writing process is that it's **MESSY!!** And that's the way it's supposed to be. All good writers, even the famous ones, go through this messy process. To show how messy the writing process is, take a look at the graphic below.



When you follow the writing process you will become a better writer. Instead of dumping a bunch of disorganized ideas onto your paper, you will be able to write a draft that is well structured and understandable.



Watch this brief video to learn more about the parts of the writing process:

[The Writing Process](#)

APPLY THE WRITING PROCESS TO YOUR STORY

PLAN

Now that you have learned about the writing process and have a start on planning your story, let's keep going! You are probably thinking that planning takes a lot of time. You're right, it does. But the more time you spend planning, the easier it will be to write your first draft.

You have lots of short pieces of writing that you did in response to the prompts. **Choose one that you want to keep writing on.** You will use that piece of writing to follow the writing process and complete your story.

Finish your planning

You have a good start on your plan but there are still some things to consider:

- Who is your audience? Who will read your story?
- What is your purpose? Why are you writing this?
- What form will you use? Will this be a story? A poem? A memoir?

You can use the [PLOT Planning Tool](#) or the one below to write your answers and keep yourself organized.

You can see completed PLOT Planning Tools [here](#) and [here](#).

PLOT Your Writing

- ✓ Pick a topic
- ✓ List ideas about your topic
- ✓ Organize your ideas
- ✓ Think about the decisions you will make about:
 - o Your audience
 - o The purpose for your piece of writing
 - o The form your writing will take



PLOT your writing			
Topic			
Ideas	List of Ideas: • • •		
Organize	Beginning	Middle	End
Decisions			
Audience	Who are you writing this for?		

Purpose	<i>Why are you writing?</i>
Form	<i>What kind of writing will you do?</i>

Now that you have your ideas organized, there's another tool that can help you with your first draft, a [rubric](#). A rubric has the qualities that make a good piece of writing. You, one of your classmates, or your teacher will use it to see if your first draft has those qualities.

DRAFT

Now **use your PLOT tool** to guide you as you **write the first draft** of your story [here](#). If you want to see the story that resulted from the PLOT Planning Tool about the lawn mower accident, **click [here](#)**. **Use this [Feelings Wheel](#)** to get ideas for good words to show emotions. Using different kinds of sentences will make your writing more interesting. Here are examples of sentence patterns: [Sentence Punctuation Patterns](#)

After you have written your first draft, **continue working through** the lesson.

REVISE

Good writers know a piece of writing is never done in one draft. There is always a way to make a piece of writing better. This is known as **revision**, which means re-visioning or re-seeing your draft so you can make changes. First, **take your first draft and your [rubric](#)** to your teacher to talk about what revisions you might need to make. **Watch** this short [video](#) that explains a strategy to help you make those revisions. To see the lawn mower story with some revisions and explanations, **click [here](#)**. Now it's time for you to **make some revisions** to your first draft.

You may have to repeat the revision process several times until you have a well crafted piece of writing, just like the famous authors do.

EDIT

Once you are done revising your piece of writing, you will most likely need to do some editing. This short [video](#) explains what to look for. If you're not sure what some of the rules are for punctuation, spelling, and grammar, this [chart of resources](#) will help.. **Go into** your final draft and **make any needed edits**.

PUBLISH

You have worked hard to have a piece of writing to be proud of. **Share that writing** as many ways as you can:

- submit it for publication in [*Beginnings*](#)
- read it to your class
- read it to your family
- hang it on the bulletin board in your classroom
- hang it on the fridge at home
- read it to your friends or coworkers
- put it up on facebook or another social media site

Make a plan for how you will share your writing and **write it** in the box below. Use some of the ideas above or your own ideas. **Talk about** how and where you will share your writing.

You can also share your draft with one of your classmates and ask them to tell you something they really liked about your piece of writing and why. If they have a piece of writing, you can do the same for them.



REFLECT

Wow! You just did a bunch of work but it paid off with a great story from your life. Now it's time for you to look back and reflect on your writing experience. Here are some questions to think and write about in the box below.

What part of the writing process was most helpful to you as a writer? Why?

What part of the writing process was most difficult for you as a writer? Why? What might make it easier for you?

How do you feel about having written a story from your own life? Do you plan to write another story about your life? Why or why not?

Congratulations!

**Not only have you made it to the end of the lesson,
you became an author in the process.**

Happy writing!



EXTEND

Submit your story to Beginnings for possible publication.

Tactile Prompts: (Lyn Ford)

- Find something that encourages a memory or holds meaning for you. It could be a piece of jewelry, a bit of cloth, a photo, a stone, a map, a spoon, a toy—anything!
- Hold it in your hand, using your senses to bring forth ideas. What do you see? What do you think? What do you feel? What do you know?
- Write what you remember or think or feel

Defining Moments Writing Activity (Lyn Ford)

- Write up to 10 defining moments in your life (1 or 2 are okay). Are there (universal) [themes](#) in the moments you've chosen? Define these themes. If several of your defining moments match specific themes, group them, and write about their connections. Write a few sentences or ideas on these connected moments.
- Consider one of your defining moments as a scene. Describe what you see, hear, feel. Who or what is there? Describe your connections—physical, familial, emotional, spiritual—to this person or thing. Write about your experience of the event, not the event.
- What might be the next snippet of this narrative?
- Share and reflect

Memoir Writing Activity (Lyn Ford)

Memoir: nonfiction narrative writing that is:

- Based in the author's personal memories
- Presented as factual*
- Shared from the author's perspective
- Written from the first-person point of view
- Less formal when compared to autobiographies and biographies
- Narrow in its scope or timeline
- Focused more on feelings and memories than facts
- *The author has more flexibility to “change” the story for effect. Examples: Do you remember, word for word, a conversation with a parent when you were three years old? Do you know what time the sun rose on an important day?

"A memoir is a collection of personal memories related to specific moments or experiences in the author's life..."

"The defining characteristic that sets memoirs apart from autobiographies and biographies is its scope. While the other genres focus on the entire timeline of a person's life, memoirs structure themselves on one aspect, such as addiction, parenting, adolescence, disease, faith, etc.

They may tell stories from various moments in the author's life, but they should read like a cohesive story—not just a re-telling of facts." – Authors Learning Center

Memoirs focus more on the author's relationship to and feelings about his or her own memories.

Six-Word Memoir (you can use something from your thematic writing)

- Get creative
- Use descriptive words.
- Imply action

Examples:

"For sale: baby shoes, never worn." (Supposedly by Ernest Hemingway)

Zak Nelson: *"I still make coffee for two."*

Crystal Kash: *"Life behind a microphone gets lonely."*

Your six-word memoir could prompt or become the beginning of your story, help you outline your story, or encourage narrative verse.

[Online Memory Sharing Sites](#)

Five places to collect and preserve family stories.