Personal Narrative of Identity and Literacy Assignment

Dr. Jainab T. Banu

SITUATION/CONTEXT

For this first major assignment, you will write a personal narrative that explores the intersection of your identity and literacy. This means reflecting on how your experiences with reading, writing, language, and communication have shaped your sense of self and how your identity (cultural, familial, linguistic, educational, etc.) has influenced your literacy journey. This assignment invites you to tell a meaningful story while also thinking critically about the broader social, cultural, and personal forces that have impacted your development as a literate individual.

AI-Assessment Scale: No-AI scale. If you would like to use it, you are encouraged to use Gemini or ChatGPT as a brainstorming/conversation tool (AI-Planning Scale) and address this in your reflective note.

AUDIENCE

Every piece of writing is crafted with a specific audience in mind. In academic settings, this often means writing for your classroom community: your instructor and peers. For this assignment, your primary audience is **yourself** and **your instructor**.

PURPOSE

By completing this assignment, you will:

- Reflect on **individual experiences and challenges related to identity** by addressing insights about self-perception, beliefs, values, and how they evolve over time.
- Use **self-assessment and reflection** to explore the key experiences, people, and cultural influences that have shaped your literacy development.
- Apply elements of **narrative storytelling** including vivid description, structure, and voice to craft an engaging personal narrative.
- Both **describe significant moments** in your literacy journey and **analyze their impact** on your development as a reader, writer, and thinker.
- Identify and examine **implicit and explicit biases** that may have shaped your access to or experience of literacy.
- Reflect on how to **recognize and handle biases** thoughtfully and critically within your own writing process.

WHAT YOU'LL SUBMIT

In-class journal entries, reflective notes, first draft of the narrative for peer-review, second draft of the narrative for instructor's feedback, in-class group presentation.

PROCESS

Please click on each week and review the weekly lesson plan.

Week 1: Course introduction and assignment instructions
Week 2: Chapter 13 of *Writing Critically*
Week 3: Guided reading and sample analysis
Week 4: Focused writing and peer-review
Week 5: Individual conferencing with Professor Banu: **Duration**: 10 mins/ student.

FORMATTING EXPECTATIONS

- 3-4 pages, double-spaced, 12-pt font (approx. 900–1200 words)
- Include a title and your name in MLA style.
- Submit as a Word or PDF file or Google Doc link.
- Citation is not required. If cited, follow MLA/ APA for both in-text citations and references.

GRADING CRITERIA

Please review this rubric to understand the grading criteria.

EXAMPLES

- Chapter 13: *Writing a Literacy Narrative* (Course Textbook)
- Deborah Brandt, "Sponsors of Literacy"
- Introduction to Translingual Writing
- What is Code-Meshing
- How To Tame a Wild Tongue by Gloria Anzaldua.
- Language Teaching New Worlds/ New Words by Bell Hooks
- How I Found Poetry in Childhood Prayer by Kaveh Akbar.
- How I Learn to Read…and Trade Stock…in Prison, Ted Talk by Curtis "Wall Street" Carroll
- Other samples will be provided in the class.