

Personal Narrative

In narrative writing events take place in chronological order over time. Events can be real or imaginary. Whether the narrative is personal or fictional they are both stories. Characteristics of personal narratives: organization based on passage of time and sequence of events; focus is on one main event; content is based on first-hand observation and memory; author’s feelings are revealed; point of view is usually first person.

	Initial Writer	Developing Writer	Fluent Writer
Organizational			
Pre-write for personal narrative pieces	n/a	generate lists; sketch; brainstorm; and talk about events of the story orally	same as developing
Plan for personal narrative pieces	n/a	determine a focal event or theme; use graphic organizers—snake that ate the rat, time line, or story board; chronologically order/sequence events	same as developing, plus paragraph for: change of time, place, major action, speaker every six to eight lines if none of the former applies
Write a personal narrative piece	n/a	write several related sentences about a focal event or theme	write multi-paragraphed pieces with a beginning hook and ending about focal event or theme
Use beginning techniques	n/a	hooks—questions, exclamations, onomatopoeia, startling fact, talk directly to the reader, definition, setting, words in capitals, bold, italics, or unusual fonts	hooks—sentence fragments, contrast, riddle, homily, alliterative phrase, quotations, exaggeration (hyperbole), play on words (pun)
Write introductory paragraph	n/a	tell <i>who, what, when, and where</i>	same as developing
Use ending techniques directly related to the focal event or theme	n/a	(one to two sentences) feeling; universal word (<i>all, every, world, etc.</i>); tell what you learned; tell what you accomplished	(paragraph) circle back to the hook; make a comparison