**Personal Narrative Essay Assignment**

**ENG4U**

Now that you’ve read and analyzed a personal narrative essay, you are going to prepare an outline for an essay that you will be writing.

**Step 1: Brainstorming a topic**

The personal narrative essay centres around a story from your own life. In your essay you will both tell the story and analyze the significance of that story. So try to think of a story that led you to an important belief you have. Maybe it’s a belief you have about what’s important in life, or a discovery you made about yourself. You may brainstorm by creating a mind map or just by doing some free-writing. Either way, you will hand in your brainstorming with this sheet.

**Step 2: Thesis**

Your thesis for an essay like this is different from other thesis statements. Think of it more like a belief statement. For example - I believe that by exploring my own fears I become wiser. You may not use that exact wording in your essay, but it doesn’t matter. You have to support your belief statement with the examples from your story but you don’t have to “prove” it.

Thesis:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3: Mapping out the story and thinking about how each element supports your belief.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Parts of the story | How it helped you develop your belief |
| Beginning: |  |
| Middle: |  |
| End: |  |

**Step 4:** **Precise and vivid language**

Narrative essays use many of the same techniques as short stories. Think about some precise and vivid uses of language you could include. Come up with at least three. They could include imagery, similes, use of contrast, metaphor, etc.

Eg/ the tango with fear makes me wise.

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**Step 5: Character? Dialogue?**

Will you have any “characters” in your essay? Any dialogue? If so who? What will they say? Remember, character and dialogue is used to help you support your thesis—not just to tell the story.

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