

# Narrative Writing

## Summary

Students will learn and apply techniques to develop and present a personal narrative/memoir. They will take their writing through all stages of the writing process. Their writing will reflect clear understanding of plot, dialogue, transitions, and descriptive details.

## Main Core Tie

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Reading: Literature Standard 1](#)

## Additional Core Ties

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Reading: Literature Standard 2](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Reading: Literature Standard 3](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Writing Standard 3 a.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Writing Standard 3 b.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Writing Standard 3 c.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Writing Standard 3 d.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Writing Standard 3 e.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Writing Standard 4](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Speaking and Listening Standard 1 a.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Speaking and Listening Standard 1 c.](#)

English Language Arts Grade 8

[Language Standard 2 c.](#)

## Time Frame

7 class periods of 45 minutes each

## Group Size

Large Groups

## Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Communication, Character

## Materials

Materials used include the reading assignments, worksheets, and websites.

## Background for Teachers

Teachers need a thorough knowledge about narratives and the components thereof in order to teach this lesson.

## Student Prior Knowledge

Students should have a basic writing knowledge. They should know how to convey a paragraph appropriately and put together a story with details.

## Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to create a narrative piece of writing that is organized and follows a formal style with a reflective conclusion. They will take their writing through the various stages of the writing process. Students will also compose writing throughout the project and read narratives followed by activities. Their work should reflect grammatical accuracy and eventually they will share their work with a group.

## Instructional Procedures

### Lesson One

First go through the focusing your binoculars lesson, which helps students understand descriptive details and sensory language. Second show an example of a narrative. Third show various prompt ideas for students and have them write down three specific ideas that they could write about and experience firsthand.

### Materials:

- Small picture and the same picture enlarged

- Non-descriptive writing sample without sensory language, personal narrative example, and prompt ideas. (Below)

- An LCD projector or an overhead in order to show the pictures

- Rules of the essay

- [Descriptive / Sensory Chart](#)

Descriptive details and sensory language (focusing your binoculars):

- Have a student in the back of the room view a small picture displayed in the front of the room.

- Example small image:

- Ask them to describe what they see. It should be difficult to see because it's so small. Allow other students to make guesses as to what they see.

- Show the picture enlarged to crisp detail on LCD projector.

- Example enlarged image:

- Ask students to be specific in describing what they see. They should explain how much more they are able to see and how clear it is.

- Show the writing example below of a non-descriptive, bad paragraph. Ask students if they feel like they're in the story. Can they hear, smell, taste, feel, and see everything that is going on?

- They shouldn't be able to. Take each sentence and ask students to make the scene more descriptive and use sensory language. Explain that they're focusing their binoculars just like the picture. We don't want a vague picture just like we don't enjoy reading vague writing. We want a detailed story. Students each write their own, but do one together first.

- Go over the rules of this assignment, make up your own or use the ones below.

### Bad writing example that students will change:

I was riding my bike down the hill. My friends were with me. We came to this hill all the time. I went off the jump. My arm broke. It hurt a lot. My friends took me home. My parents took me to the hospital. The doctor put my arm in a cast.

Narrative Example: Show students the personal narrative below or make up your own. Before reading it, tell students to look for descriptive details and sensory language and how these parts drew them in or they connected.

When you're done reading it, have students fill out the Descriptive/Sensory chart. Make sure to define for your students and give examples of what descriptive details mean and sensory language (5 senses).

#### Personal Narrative Example

It was a beautiful, summer's day. I was five years old and I skipped out to my swing. The swing was based on my favorite cartoon, Sesame Street. I loved to swing so high that I'd almost throw up. As I skipped out the door, I saw something very wrong. My older sister was on my swing. She smiled at me and kept swinging.

Her long brown hair swung behind her and then in front of her again. Her legs pumped even higher. I could tell from the expression on her face that she was mocking me. She knew that the swing was mine and yet she was on it.

"Get off my swing, right now!" I shouted at her.

She smiled, "Nope," and then kept on swinging.

"Get off now or else," I stated between clenched teeth.

"Or else what?" she smirked and then stuck her tongue out at me.

Next, blood filled my face. My fists tightened until my fingernails dug into the palms. I ran at full speed for her. My stubby, little legs gaining speed. I felt like Batman flying through the air. I threw my body at her, knocking us both onto the ground.

I had always been a biter. It was the type of kid that bit the neighbor's kid and chewed on tables. It was my defense mechanism. I would bite on something whenever I was frustrated or wanted to get someone's attention. It always worked.

My sister, Mel, was crushed on the ground and still disoriented from me jumping on her. I took advantage of the situation and sunk my teeth into her smooth, pink cheek. Blood filled my mouth and I could hear her screaming.

I felt my mother's arms wrap around my waist. She pulled me until I was completely off of my sister, so I unclenched my teeth. Mel held her face while the blood spilled between her white fingers. I climbed onto my swing while they rushed her inside.

Miraculously, she didn't need stitches, but she and I both learned something about one another, which took a long time for us to get over. We learned that I would use violence to get what I wanted and that she would continue to bait me until I got there.

#### Descriptive Sensory Chart

Descriptive detail or sensory language:	How it sucked me in or how I connected with it:
Example: <i>Sesame Street swing set</i>	Example: <i>I could really picture Big Bird and Elmo all over the swing set, which helped me get a good idea of what it looked like. I loved Sesame Street as a little kid, so I can see how she would be upset about her sister being on her swing.</i>

#### Prompt examples

Show the various ideas for prompts for kids as well as any rules that you have. I've attached both the rules and some prompts, but you can make up your own. Make sure that students know they can write about anything they want to as long as it is something they have experienced. They need to pick three specific things that have happened in their lives that they could write about descriptively and with sensory language.

They need to be specific, for example: When I broke my foot on a trampoline, when I received my first

kiss, or the time I almost bit my sister's cheek off. Each experience should not last longer than one minute of their life. We don't want a vacation, we want one minute of that vacation that can be described specifically.

Make a list of 3 ideas where you could really go into detail (focus your binoculars) and have it really sound like you (voice). Think PG.

Injuries

Scars

Firsts (day of school, kiss, holiday, etc.)

Friends

Cooking experience

Hobbies gone well or horribly wrong

Bad day

Great day

School experience

Vacation moment

Throwing up

Swimming

Moments in games

Specific ideas

When I bit my sister's cheek.

When I bit my sister's cheek.

I tried to jump out of a window and fly.

Broke my ankle because of a big kid jumping on me.

Blacked out from a table hitting my head.

When Mark put his knee through the wall and sheet rock.

Embarrassing ptc

Lightening games with Mark

Ran into a door in front of my crush

Tubing

Eating a Hershey kiss with weevils

Students need to turn to their neighbors and explain their three ideas about what they could write about. They need to describe to their neighbor their three ideas and how each would show descriptive details and sensory language. Students will turn in their list after they've written next to each how they will show descriptive details and sensory language.

Show the example: When I broke my foot on a trampoline- I can use descriptive detail and sensory language by describing the pain, showing my surroundings and what my ankle looked like, explaining the smells and what I could hear.

Personal Narrative checklist/Rules

You are going to write a story about something that has happened to you. AKA a memoir or a memory.

Descriptive Details-five senses, feel like we're there.

Voice-it sounds like you

1 Event (1 minute max-5 min. max)

Background information (comes with details)-info. We'll need

Catchy beginning-suck us in/grab our attention.

Clear Order-not confusing

Shows what it means to you (Mood or tone)

Runs Smooth

2-5 pages, paragraphs/ 4-6 sent.

Grammar stuff

NO !, NO abbreviations (lol, omg, &, #, w/)

PG-no gore or skanky

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## Lesson Two

First, go through the rules of dialogue, show examples, and have them write dialogue.

Second, explain the importance of relevant background information. Each of these sections could be taught on a separate day to ensure clarification.

### Materials:

- [Example of dialogue](#)  
and relevant background information
- [Survival 1](#)  
, by John M. Floyd  
Elmo Document Camera (optional)

### Pick:

Previously students had three ideas about what they wanted to write about for their personal narrative. Tell them that they need to decide which one they want to write about. They should write down on a piece of paper, which one they've decided to do.

Now they need to think about a conversation that happened during their experience. It doesn't need to be exactly what was said if they can't remember, but they need to have a conversation in their mind. Tell to write down what happened in the conversation. If a conversation didn't exist in their story then, they need to make one up that could have happened and make it believable.

For example: I am going to write about when I bit my sister's cheek. We had a conversation before I bit her cheek about how she was on my swing and then I had a conversation with my parents after biting her about how that's not ok.

### Dialogue

Explain that good narratives include dialogue between characters, but there are grammatical rules that need to be followed such as capitalizations, punctuating correctly, new paragraphs, and synonyms for who said what and clarification on who's talking.

Show the example of the various types of dialogue and walk through with the students where and when they need capitalizations, how to punctuate correctly, when the quotation marks should be placed, and clarification on who is speaking.

Allow them time to write up one or several of the conversations from their personal narrative.

Tell them to follow the rules of dialogue by having quotation marks around what people say, capitalizing the beginning of quotation mark, punctuating accordingly, and making sure that the reader knows who is speaking.

Pair share: Have them get with their partner and share their dialogue with them. Tell the reader to check for the rules of dialogue. If the writer didn't have correct grammatical rules then, they need to fix them. Students will turn in their dialogue for checking.

Students share their examples and we can fix them together. (Optional: use an Elmo document camera.)

### Example dialogue

I knew that he would be the guy for me, if I could just have the guts to talk to him. He strutted down the hall towards me. I held my breath and stepped away from my locker.

"Hey Phil," it was all I could think of. He stopped dead in his tracks and appraised me.

"How's it going Cameron?" his smooth voice made me smile. I knew that he knew my name. The silence dragged as I thought of more things to say.

"Would you be willing to help me with this essay that Hennessy has me writing?" I asked, even though I was totally done. He grinned.

"Sure, do you want me to come over to your house after school?" Phil asked still grinning.  
"Yeah, I'd really appreciate it," I muttered, "Wait, do you need directions?" His grin broadened.  
"Nope, I put a Valentine on your porch a couple of weeks ago. See yeah," he said and walked away. My jaw had dropped almost to the floor. I knew it was him.

Students will turn in this paper.

#### Relevant background information

Explain to students that we don't need to know every single detail about their lives just the things that are relevant to the story that they're trying to share with us.

Go back to the example of a personal narrative shown in Lesson 1. Ask them what information they needed to know about this person's life, so that they could relate with the story.

Examples: Need to know about the main character's extreme love for the swing set to the point of violence, need to know that the character she attacks is her sister, and need to know possibly what the weather is like for this story.

Underneath or on the back of their dialogue paper tell them to list important background information that is essential and relevant to their story. We don't need to know everything. The story is only supposed to be a specific moment in their lives. The event that happened should not last more than one minute of their life, which forces students to be very specific and detailed especially if the length of the piece needs to be several pages (see rules for personal narrative).

Pair share: Have students share their background information with their neighbor remembering to listen for relevant information to their story.

#### Example essential background information

Love of Sesame Street swing set

Older, mean sister

A child that bites

Summer Day

Check dialogue for quotation marks, capitalization, punctuation, and knowledge of the speaker.

Check background information for relevancy.

#### Reading Literature

Have your students determine the theme of a text and decide what the theme is of their personal narrative. Have them think about filling in the blank

All you need is\_\_\_\_\_.

Tell students to decide what lesson they learned from their experience or the theme of their personal narrative. Students should share these with a partner, not necessarily turn them in.

#### Survival 1

by John M. Floyd

Theme of <i>The Survival</i> excerpt	Theme of your personal narrative

#### Lesson Three

First have students plot out their narratives using a computer or if you don't have access just have them create a plot chart of their narrative (i.e. Basic situation, list of complications, climax, and resolution). Next have them work on the Miss Sadie narrative and the associated worksheet.

Writing: Use narrative techniques such as pacing and reflection to develop an experience.

#### Materials:

- [ReadWriteThink - Plot Structure: A Literary Elements Mini-Lesson](#)
- [Miss Sadie narrative](#)
- [Miss Sadie worksheet](#)

#### Plot it out

Good narratives and stories follow a plot structure to help organize the pace and thought process.

Have students go through the process below if you have computer access:

Visit [ReadWriteThink - Plot Structure: A Literary Elements Mini-Lesson](#)

Read the Overview section that explains plot structure.

Scroll down to Featured Resources

Click on and review the Plot PowerPoint Presentation

Once you understand the Plot PowerPoint Presentation click on Plot Diagram.

Fill out this section according to the experience you are planning to write about. Do the best that you can from what you remember. It is a narrative not an autobiography. The events can be stretched based on the author.

### Reading Literature

Analyze how dialogue and incidents in a story propel action, reveal a character, or provoke a decision. Below is an example of how dialogue and incidents effects a story. After you've had students familiarize themselves with the information below, have them read the narrative and do the practice assignment.

#### A. Dialogue:

As students have already learned dialogue can bring a piece of writing to life. Dialogue can also propel the action of a story forward.

Propel action: Think about if in a fight scene dialogue was said the effect, "Bring it on," and then they start beating each other up. If the words aren't there, the fighting might not happen.

Reveal character: Maybe instead of saying, "Bring it on," the fighter says, "You ain't got a chance." We learn about the character from the way he speaks. We might assume that he has a Southern or Texas accent when we read what he says. We also might think he's not that educated because he speaks improperly. Maybe he knows something about the other character that gives him a winning chance. Perhaps the fighting speaker has amazing strength or is a superhero. We learn so much about the fighter based on what he says.

Provoke a decision: The fighter that hears the other fighter calling him on may feel provoked to make a decision. He doesn't have to fight, but what if the speaker says, "It's either you or your wimpy friend that needs a good beating." The fighting listener might feel the need to protect their friend and chooses to fight the speaker all based on what was said.

#### B. Incidents:

An incident in a story can propel the action, reveal a character, or provoke a decision.

Propel the action: The example story spoken of above could have an incident where one boy steals another boy's family picture out of his locker and starts making fun of him. The incidents will most like propel the action forward and result in either a war of words or a fight.

Reveal a character: We can learn a lot about a boy that steals a family picture from another boy's locker. He is willing to invade someone's space. He feels the need to bring attention to the incident at hand. We also know that a fight will most likely ensue due to his actions.

Provoke a decision: What has caused this boy to steal from the other boy. He could feel jealousy for the love that the other boy has for his family and wants to make him feel bad, so that he doesn't feel as crummy about his family. A lot of decisions can be made based on prior knowledge.

Have students analyze the following narrative, which is a tribute to a person. Make sure they answer each question in great detail and use examples from the story to back up what they're saying. If they don't use examples from the story to back up what they're saying they won't get

any credit! People won't believe what you have to say unless you back it up with evidence. The following is a Writing Sample taken from the Utah English Language Arts Core (ELA Common Core).

Student Sample: Grade 8, Narrative

This narrative was written to fulfill an assignment in which students were asked to introduce a special person to readers who did not know the person. The students were advised to reveal the personal quality of their relationship with the person presented. The student who wrote this piece borrowed ideas from a fictional piece she had read.

Miss Sadie

Miss Sadie no longer sits in her rocking chair on her porch on summer days. But I can still see her. The old chair squeaking with every sway of her big brown body. Her summer dresses stained from cooking in her sweet smelling kitchen. I see her gray hair pulled back in that awful, yellow banana clip. Most of all, I hear that voice. So full of character and wisdom.

I used to bring Miss Johnson cookies every summer day of 1988. I miss the days when I would sit on that shabby old porch and listen to her stories. "Melissa!" she would holler. "What 'chu doin' here? Come and see me and my poor self, have ya?"

She once told me of her grandmother. Who escaped slavery, back when white men could only do anything, she would say. Her grandma ran for miles without food and water. It wasn't too long before her master came looking for her and took her home to whip her. I thought of how blacks are treated today. I sighed. She would sing in her soulful blaring voice, old negro hymns passed down from her mother and grandmother. I would sit there in amazement.

Once, Jimmy Taylor came walking by us yelling, "Melissa! Whattaya want with that old, fat, black lady, anyways?"

Before I could retaliate Miss Johnson said to me "now you mustn't. We must feel sorry for that terrible child. His mother must have done gone and not taught him no manners!" She actually wanted me to bow my head and pray for him. (Even though I went to his house and punched him out the next day.)

My friends would tease me for spending the whole summer with Sadie Johnson, "The cuckoo of Connecticut," they called her. But I'm so very glad I did. She taught me then, to not care what people thought. I learned that I could be friends with someone generations apart from my own.

My visits became less frequent when school started. I had other things to think about. Boys, clothes, grades, you know, real important stuff.

One day I was thinking, I haven't seen Miss Sadie in a while. So after school I trotted up to her house amidst the twirling, autumn leaves.

I rang her bell. The door cracked open and the woman adjusted her glasses. "May I help you?"

"Miss Sadie, it's me Melissa."

"I-I" She'd stuttered. "I don't remember" she said and shut the door. I heard crying? I rang the door again and she screamed, "Please leave!" In a scared confused voice.

I went home bewildered and my mother told me to stop bothering Miss Sadie. I said I wasn't bothering her. Mama said "Miss Johnson has a disease. Alzheimer's disease. It makes her forget things... people, family even, and so, I don't want you over there anymore you hear?"

Then I didn't realize or comprehend how someone so special to you could forget your own existence when you'd shared a summer so special and vivid in your mind.

That Christmas I went to bring Miss Johnson cookies. She wasn't there. I learned from a family member that she was in the hospital and that she'd die very soon. As the woman, a daughter maybe, spoke, my heart broke.

"Well, you make sure she gets these cookies." I said, my voice cracking and tears welling in my eyes.

Today I've learned to love old people, for their innocence, for their knowledge. I've learned to



always treat people with kindness, no matter how cruel they may seem. But mainly I've learned that you must cherish the time spent with a person. And memories are very valuable. Because Miss Sadie no longer sits in her rocking chair on her front porch on summer days. I'm glad I can still see her.

*This student writing sample was included in the Common Core State Standards with the express permission from the California Department of Education.*

#### Miss Sadie Worksheet

Question:	Explain in detail. Use examples from the story with every answer.
1. How does the dialogue tell us who Miss Sadie is?	
2. How does the dialogue tell us who the author is?	
3. How does the pacing work for this narrative? Too fast, too slow, just right, explain why using words that deal with plot structure (climax, resolution, etc.)	
4. How does the dialogue propel the action?	
5. What does the incident with Jimmy Taylor tell us about the narrator?	
6. How does their relationship work for them?	
7. Who do you think needed their conversations more the narrator or Miss Sadie. Back up your opinion with lots of details from the story.	
8. What does this teach you about special relationships?	
9. How does the incident with Miss Sadie having Alzheimer's affect the narrator as a person?	
10. What has provoked the narrator's decision at the end of the narrative?	

#### Lesson Four

Take students through transitioning and sequencing and then allow them to write about a first. Next have them work through the short story and the worksheet that focuses on time frame, setting, sequencing, and the connection made there.

#### Materials:

- [Hamilton, Virginia "The People Could Fly."](#)
- [Transition worksheet](#)

#### Writing

Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationship among experiences and events (this

last part we'll complete during the reading literature section).

Have students do the following:

Using a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses can convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationship among experiences and events.

Here are some signal words that tell you there will be a transition in time or setting:

No longer	Still	Used to
Once	Then	Today
Back when	In addition	Afterwards
Next	In the meantime	Between
Subsequently	However	***And many more!
1	2	3

[This web site has more transition words.](#)

Have students come up with three more on their own and fill in the three blanks above. Have them think about words that if they were reading a story and they saw this word, they would know that time had changed or that the characters had gone to a different location.

Have students think about what each of these transition words actually mean. Afterwards would mean=something happened in a story after something else. No longer means=No longer means that something in a story no longer will happen. Words like this help the reader know when a transition to something else is happening. It creates clarity and understanding.

On a piece of paper have students write about a first that has happened to them. The experience need to be one that they can actually remember. Examples could be: First vacation, first dental/doctor visit, Different food firsts, first Christmas, etc. Have students pick one and start telling us the story, but as they're writing make sure that they're including transition words when there is a shift in time or setting. Have them underline their transition words. Several paragraphs will work. I have written an example for you to help them see what I mean. Make sure that they have plenty of transition words, since that's the purpose of the assignment.

Example

First day of Preschool

Today was my first day of Preschool. My bright red shoes shined as I made my way into Mrs. Jensen's preschool. I felt like Dorothy from "The Wizard of Oz." It was my favorite show. I couldn't wear my hair right because it was too short, but the shoes made the package deal. Still , I wish my mom had tried harder at home on my hair instead of just putting on a head band. I'd just walked through the door when I saw him, my future husband. He may not have realized it yet, but we were meant to be. My whole body tingled from the very sight of this beautiful boy. Once when I went on a swing I decided to jump out. The free falling feeling felt exactly like the moment I was having right now.

In the meantime, Mrs. Jensen was helping Taylor, my beloved, remove his coat and help him find his seat. My mom managed to uproot me from my frozen state and sit me right next to him. A sliver of light could barely pass between us. Subsequently, my hands started to shake and I dropped the crayon that had been handed to me. Taylor lifted it up and placed it back in my hand. Our eyes met just once, but I knew he felt the same way.

Now it's their turn. Several paragraphs about a first including transition words that are underlined.

Reading Literature

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including connotative meanings. The words that we are going to focus on in order to understand their connotative meanings are transition words. Read the following short story below. Look for specific transition words that signal the reader about a sequence, shift in time frame or setting, and show the relationship among

experiences and events.

Have students fill in the chart below the story, put each of the words under the correct section and then explain why they put them there. I counted 7 transition words; have them remember to think about time passing.

Hamilton, Virginia. "The People Could Fly." *The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales*. New York: Knopf Books for Young Readers, 1985. (1985)

They say the people could fly. Say that long ago in Africa, some of the people knew magic. And they would walk up on the air like climbin up on a gate. And they flew like blackbirds over the fields. Black, shiny wings flappin against the blue up there.

Then, many of the people were captured for Slavery. The ones that could fly shed their wings. They couldn't take their wings across the water on slave ships. Too crowded, don't you know.

The folks were full of misery, then. Got sick with the up and down of the sea. So they forgot about flyin when they could no longer breathe the sweet scent of Africa.

Say the people who could fly kept their power, although they shed their wings. They looked the same as the other people from Africa who had been coming over, who had dark skin. Say you couldn't tell anymore one who could fly from one who couldn't.

One such who could was an old man, call him Toby. And standin tall, yet afraid, was a young woman who once had wings. Call her Sarah. Now Sarah carried a babe tied to her back. She trembled to be so hard worked and scorned.

The slaves labored in the fields from sunup to sundown. The owner of the slaves callin himself their Master. Say he was a hard lump of clay. A hard, glinty coal. A hard rock pile, wouldn't be moved. His Overseer on horseback pointed out the slaves who were slowing down. So the one called Driver cracked his whip over the slow ones to make them move faster. That whip was a slice-open cut of pain. So they did move faster. Had to.

#### Transition Worksheet

I believe there are 5 transition words in the story above.

Sequence	Shift in time frame or setting	Shows the relationship among the experiences and events
Example: Next: The step followed the next step.	Example: No longer is a shift in time. She will no longer be here because she's died.	Example: No longer-Miss Sadie has passed on and no longer sits in her rocking chair. This shows that we'll learn about her, but know that she's died.

#### Lesson Five

First decide how you want to teach dramatic irony. I have a website to help you, but decide how you would like students to get that information. Second, if you are comfortable with the language of Huck Finn have them go to the following website or pull up the reading. Third, have students really start getting their narrative on paper with all of the parts including a reflective conclusion.

Materials:

- [Dramatic Irony](#)
- [Huck Finn example](#)

#### Reading Literature

Have students read through the *Huck Finn* example until they discover the dramatic irony of the piece.

Have them explain the dramatic irony from *Huck Finn* wrestles with conscience, they should use examples from the piece to back up their reasoning. (Remember that *Huck Finn* was published in 1884 and their vocabulary was different and uncensored back then-be prepared for that).

### Writing

Have students provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events. As they are writing their narrative, they should incorporate the following: descriptive details, dialogue, transitions, sensory language, organized events, reflective conclusion, describing characters, and point of view.

When they start writing their personal narrative they need to think about how they want to write it: first person, omniscient, or 3rd limited point of view. Most students would choose first person due to the fact that it happened to them, but it's totally up to them. At the end of their piece make sure that they include a reflective conclusion. A reflective conclusion is where you explain to the audience what you've learned from this experience or what it has taught you.

As they are writing the piece make sure to include the following: descriptive details, dialogue, transitions, sensory language, organized events, descriptive characters, a reflective conclusion, and a definite point of view chosen. Below is an example. Have students read through it and check to make sure that all of the parts are there.

Remind students that their experience should last only one to two minutes of their life, 2-3 pages double spaced 12 point font, Times New Roman.

### Personal Narrative Example

It was a beautiful, summer's day. I was five years old and I skipped out to my swing. The swing was based on my favorite cartoon, Sesame Street. I loved to swing so high that I'd almost throw up. As I skipped out the door, I saw something very wrong. My older sister was on my swing. She smiled at me and kept swinging.

Her long brown hair swung behind her and then in front of her again. Her legs pumped even higher. I could tell from the expression on her face that she was mocking me. She knew that the swing was mine and yet she was on it.

"Get off my swing, right now!" I shouted at her.

She smiled, "Nope," and then kept on swinging.

"Get off now or else," I stated between clenched teeth.

"Or else what?" she smirked and then stuck her tongue out at me.

Next, blood filled my face. My fists tightened until my fingernails dug into the palms. I ran at full speed for her. My stubby, little legs gaining speed. I felt like Batman flying through the air. I threw my body at her, knocking us both onto the ground.

I had always been a biter. It was the type of kid that bit the neighbor's kid and chewed on tables. It was my defense mechanism. I would bite on something whenever I was frustrated or wanted to get someone's attention. It always worked.

My sister, Mel, was crushed on the ground and still disoriented from me jumping on her. I took advantage of the situation and sunk my teeth into her smooth, pink cheek. Blood filled my mouth and I could hear her screaming.

I felt my mother's arms wrap around my waist. She pulled me until I was completely off of my sister, so I unclenched my teeth. Mel held her face while the blood spilled between her white fingers. I climbed onto my swing while they rushed her inside.

Miraculously, she didn't need stitches, but she and I both learned something about one another, which took a long time for us to get over. We learned that I would use violence to get what I wanted and that she would continue to bait me until I got there.

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### Lesson Six

Allow students an opportunity to peer and personally review their writing with one or more partners and then make any corrections where needed. Below is the Peer Review worksheet. When students

have finished their corrections, allow them time to correct them. If the writing has already been typed, then allow them to go back in and make changes. If computer access is only available on occasion then, a typed final draft would be appropriate for the teacher. If there is no computer access then, have students rewrite in pen and make it neat and legible. When final copy is complete, allow students to share within small constructive groups or to the whole class as time will allow. The small groups should be collaborative. Students within the group shouldn't just be idle listeners, but asking questions and stating truths.

#### Materials:

- [Peer Review Worksheet](#)

Peer and personal review (change the title accordingly)

Peer/Personal Review Form

Writer: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the point of view? (first, third limited, or omniscient)

How do you know it's that point of view?

Write an example of that point of view: \_\_\_\_\_

Are they consistent throughout the essay with the same point of view?

How can you tell?

Do you want to read this? Why or why not?

Were their events in a logical, sequential order? Why or why not?

Who is the narrator? (Who is telling the story?) Describe them.

Who are the other characters in the story and describe them in detail.

Write out some of their dialogue. At least 2 lines of a conversation between 2 or more people.

Tell me how you can tell it is different people.

List some or all of their transition words then, explain next to each what the shift is in-a time frame or sequence? Shows the relationship among the experiences and events as well.

List some of their descriptive details that help you feel like you're right there in the story.

List any or all of their phrases with sensory language (things that would show you what something looks like, feels like, smells like, tastes like, or sounds like).

What is the theme of this piece? Explain your reasoning with details from the narrative.

What did this person learn from this story? How did they reflect? Explain in detail.

What are some questions that you have for the writer of this piece? Come up with at least three questions that would cause the writer to explain something in detail (example: Why did you decide to write about this?)

Find three connections between your piece and the narrative that you are reading and explain those connections below.

Did they spell everything correctly? Yes / No

Draw a plot structure on this person's narrative. Make sure to include: Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, and Resolution). If you can't remember what the parts mean

[review the PowerPoint presentation in the ReadWriteThink lesson plan.](#)

#### Check Off for grading completed personal Narrative

Description	Yes	No
Descriptive details		
Dialogue		
Transitions		
Sensory language		
Organized events		
Reflective conclusion		
Describing characters		

Point of view		
Two minutes of their life, 2-3 pages double spaced 12 point font, Times New Roman		
Did they fix any errors?		

#### Worksheet Check Off

Worksheets	Yes	No
Descriptive/Sensory Chart		
Miss Sadie		
Transition Worksheet		
Peer Review Worksheet(s)		

#### Reading Check Off

Reading	Yes	No
Example dialogue		
Miss Sadie		
Narrative Example		
Survival 1		
<i>The People Could Fly</i>		

Attached is a printable version of this lesson plan.

#### Strategies for Diverse Learners

If students are struggling with any concepts, review and practice more. Examples are given in every lesson, so my recommendation would be to show them more examples that you have created or found. Grouping is always critical. Make sure that when students are diverse and have special needs diversify the group. Place some of the gifted students with those that are in need of assistance. Always make sure to follow IEP procedures if there are any writing or reading accommodations.

#### Extensions

Extensions: Students that desire a greater extension could do one of the following or several. • Create a video of your personal narrative • Turn your narrative into a script • Write diary entries • Create a drawing of your piece

#### Assessment Plan

I've attached rubrics and check lists.

#### Bibliography

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#### Authors

