

## Autobiographical Narrative

**Prompt:** Compose a narrative about a significant event in your life. Explain how this event changed you and what you might have learned from it.

**Format:** MLA style

1. Length: 1.5 pages
2. Font: Times New Roman
3. Font size: 12
4. Margins: 1" all around
5. Spacing: Double Spaced
6. Heading: Upper left hand corner (double spaced)

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| First & Last Name:     | Paul Pott    |
| Teacher's Name:        | Mrs. Weasley |
| Period or Class Title: | Period 6     |
| Due Date:              | June 4, 1984 |

**Directions:** Complete the following steps in order to complete the assignment

1. Brainstorm
2. Choose an Experience
3. Gather Details (Body)
4. Expand sentences
5. Describe how you were like before the experience (Intro)
6. Describe how you are like after the experience (Conclusion)
7. Fill out Essay Organizer
8. Revise and type

## 1. Brainstorm

**Directions:** List as many significant events that you can think of. Try to think of things that have changed you or taught you a lesson.

**Possible topics:**

Things I might write about:

1. Your first day of school
2. The time you were most frightened
3. A fight with a friend
4. Winning an award
5. A death in the family
6. Moving to a new country
7. Learning a new language
8. Making a team

## 2. Choose your experience

1. **Answer** the question below. Use any one of the sentence starters.

What life experience did you decide to write about and why?

- *I decided to write about \_\_\_\_\_ because...*
- *I chose to write about \_\_\_\_\_ due to the fact that...*  
*Ex. I decided to write about the time I made the football team because it taught me that I can do anything if I work hard.*

## 3. Gather Details (Body)

**Directions:** List the sequence of events of everything that happened during the event that you chose to write about. Try not to leave out any details.

**Example:**

1. I was told by a friend that there were tryouts.
2. I asked the coach to find out the details.
3. I worked out to get ready.
4. I showed up early to the field
5. I ran drills
6. I was knocked down
7. Etc...

Make a list of your own.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Expand Sentences (Body)

Directions: Go back and expand your sentences by providing more details. Use precise words whenever you can. Use another paper if you run out of space.

Example

1. I was told by a friend that there were tryouts.

1. Added a time detail:  
When exactly did it  
happen?

2. Added a specific name and  
relationship.

*At the end of eighth grade, my best friend Jason told me that*

*Rosemead High School was going to be holding football tryouts for the*

*Fall season. I was extremely nervous because even though I*

*desperately wanted to be on the team, I have never been very good at  
sports.*

3. Added a place  
detail: Where did it  
happen?

4. Added detail about  
emotion.

5. Added detail about  
the tryouts: "tryouts for  
the Fall season"

2. I asked the coach to find out more details.

1. Added a time  
detail: When  
exactly did it

2. Added a specific  
name

*The next week I showed up after school to talk to Coach Koffler to find  
out when I should show up and what I should do to get ready.*

3. Added detail: replace "find out more details,"  
with "find out when I should show up and what I  
should do to get ready."

## 5. Explain how you were like before the experience. (Intro)

Directions: Now that you have described your significant experience, describe what you were like before, so that people know why your experience is important to you. Use the following sentence starters to help you.

### 1. Opening sentence/ Attention grabber (one sentence)

Ex. Have you ever been faced with a challenge that you just knew you would not be able to overcome?

- *Have you ever...?*
- *When was the last time...?*
- *How would you feel if... ?*

### 2. Topic - sum up your experience (one sentence)

Ex. One of the most important experiences in my life was the time that I tried out for the Rosemead High School football team, because it taught me that if I work hard, I can accomplish anything.

- *One of the most important experiences in my life was... because...*
- *Perhaps the most influential experience in my life was the time when... because...*
- *Looking back at my life, the time when... was extremely important to me because...*
- *When I think about my life, I get the feeling that... made me who I am now, because...*

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### 3. Say what you were like before. (one sentence)

Ex. I used to believe that I should give up whenever situations got too tough, due to the fact that it seemed that all my life I had failed at sports.

- *I used to believe that \_\_\_\_\_, due to the fact that...*
- *The old me would have thought " \_\_\_\_\_," because I always thought that...*
- *In the past, I felt that \_\_\_\_\_, because...*

### 4. Give details or examples. (write at least 2 good sentences)

Ex. For instance, when I had to memorize fifty vocabulary words for a test in eighth grade I responded by giving up, because I felt that there was no chance that I would get an A. People used to tell me that I was lazy, due to the fact that I never wanted to try anything too difficult.

- *For instance, \_\_\_\_\_ I responded by \_\_\_\_\_ because I felt that...*
- *One time, when \_\_\_\_\_, I reacted by \_\_\_\_\_ because I thought that...*
- *People used to tell me that I was \_\_\_\_\_ due to the fact that...*
- *Sometimes it felt that \_\_\_\_\_ because...*
- *I suppose that I always \_\_\_\_\_ whenever...*

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### 5. Give a hint about your experience. (one sentence)

Ex. Little did I know, all of that was about to change the day that Shawn Foster hit me with a tackle hard enough to knock out Muhammad Ali.

- *Little did I know, all of that was about to change when...*
- *I did not expect it then, but it was all going to change after...*
- *If I knew what was going to happen I would have felt \_\_\_\_\_ because that was the last time that I would think...*

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**6. Explain how you were now, after the experience. (Conclusion)**

Directions: Now that you have described your significant experience and told the reader what you were like before, it is time to tell the reader what you are like now. Explain how you have changed and what you have learned.

1. Sum up how you have changed (at least one sentence)

Ex. Before making the football team, I used to give up every time I came across a challenge that was too difficult, but now that I have self-confidence, I feel like I can take on anything.

- *Before* \_\_\_\_\_ *I used to* \_\_\_\_\_ *but now...*
- *If this was* \_\_\_\_\_ *years ago, I would probably still think that* \_\_\_\_\_ *but now that* \_\_\_\_\_ *I know that...*
- *Prior to* \_\_\_\_\_ *I used to* \_\_\_\_\_ *Nowadays though, I* \_\_\_\_\_ *because...*

- *If I'm ever in a situation where* \_\_\_\_\_ *I know that* \_\_\_\_\_.
- *Now, people tell me that* \_\_\_\_\_ *because...*
- *I've noticed that I no longer* \_\_\_\_\_ *because I know that...*

4. Give some advice to the reader. (one sentence)

Ex. In my opinion, people should not be afraid to take up challenges and push themselves to the limit.

- *In my opinion, people should...*
- *Based on my experience...*
- *If you ever want to* \_\_\_\_\_ *I suggest that you...*
- *Perhaps one thing that we can all learn from this is...*

2. Explain the key lesson that you learned (at least one sentence)

Ex. I learned that if I dedicate myself and set goals for myself I can succeed, even if the challenge is tough.

- *I learned that* \_\_\_\_\_ *because...*
- *Now I know that* \_\_\_\_\_ *because...*
- *Today I know that* \_\_\_\_\_ *because...*
- *I have discovered that* \_\_\_\_\_ *because...*

3. Give details or examples about how things are like now. (write at least 3 good sentences)

Ex. For instance, now when I have a difficult test coming up, instead of shying away, I attack it head on. I look at life differently now because I am no longer afraid to try things that are tough.

- *For instance, now when* \_\_\_\_\_ *instead of* \_\_\_\_\_ *like before, I respond by* \_\_\_\_\_.

Introduction: Explain what you were like before the event.

Body: Describe your event.



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| Conclusion: Describe what you learned and how you have changed.<br>Give some advice to the reader. |
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