

“I remember” prompts for Creative Nonfiction

First, jot down your responses to each of the items in this list as quickly as possible:

I remember...

- **a place**
- **my parents' work**
- **an important event**
- **food**
- **music**
- **something someone said to me**
- **a significant object**

Here are ways to expand each of the items you listed above:

- **a place could open into a piece of descriptive writing or a scene from memory.**
- **your parents' work could open into a memory of going with them, helping, being in the way. Could be a remembered dialogue between your parents about work. Could be a poem made from a litany of tools they used.**
- **an important event could open into freewriting all the memories of that experience, then writing it as a scene, with description and dialogue. It's also possible to let the description become setting and directions and let the dialogue turn into a play.**

- food could open into a scene at the table, a character sketch of the person who prepared the food, a litany of different experiences with it, a process essay of how to make it.
- music could take you to a scene where the music is playing; could provide you the chance to interleave the words of the song and words you might have said (or a narrative of what you were thinking and feeling at the time the song was first important to you (“Where I’m Singing From”).
- something someone said to you could open into a scene or a poem which captures that moment; could be what you wanted to say back but never did.
- a significant object could open into a sensory exploration of the object-what it felt, sounded, smelled, looked, and tasted like; then where it came from, what happened to it, a memory of your connection with it. Is there a secret or a longing connected with this object? A message? If you could go back to yourself when this object was important to you, what would you ask, tell, or give yourself?