

Literacy Memoir (Narrative) and Analysis through Theoretical Lens

[STANDARDS: 3.A.1; 3.A. 3; 3.A.5; 3.A.6; 3.A.9; 3.A.10; 3.A.14; 3.A.15; 3.C.1; 3.C.2; 3.C.3]

Part 1: Memoir

Write a memoir about a classroom literacy experience you have actually had as a student in either a junior high or high school Language Arts class. (Please use pseudonyms for instructors and academic institutions.) Think of a memorable experience from your Language Arts classes. It can be either a positive or negative experience, but it must be based on personal experience. Write about the experience in narrative (story) form. This means you will need to create the setting, develop the characters, and describe the action. ***Make your readers feel like a fly on your shoulder, experiencing the event just as you did.*** Consider such aspects as the texts and materials the instructor used and the ways that these correlated to your individual needs, learning style, and abilities as a student. How did the instructor's teaching strategies and materials influence your understanding of the assignment? How did your own cultural background, age, expectations, and attitude shape your understanding of the assignment and/or your level of enthusiasm for completing it? Remember that good stories rely on aesthetic dimensions of communication arts/literature. To achieve aesthetic appeal, express your ideas by using descriptive details (show, don't tell; T&F; sensory diction), providing necessary background information and time markers, and development of plot, characters, theme, and setting.

Even though your story is based on a real experience, this is a chance for you to exercise your creative side--a chance for you to enjoy writing (using language) for learning and enjoyment. I strongly encourage you to review Nancie Atwell's ideas about Memoirs, Short Stories, Developing a Character, Writing Dialogue, and more.

Length of memoir (creative non-fiction): 4-6 pages, following format for short papers (beyond 4 pages but not in excess of 6 pages)

Part 2: Analysis through Theoretical Lens

Write a critical analysis of your literacy experience (the details of which are expressed in your story) through the lens of the theorists included in this class. What would Milner, Milner, Mitchell and others cited within their work have to say about your experience? How would they critique it? Imagine sitting at a round table with several prominent CAL theorists and telling them your story. What kinds of comments would they make about specific moments in your narrative?

Make sure your analysis focuses on details included in your memoir. In other words, make sure your memoir actually contains the details you wish to analyze.

This assignment requires you to incorporate ideas from Milner, Milner, and Mitchell's *Bridging English* as well as the theorists/teachers included in their book. **To meet this end, you will need to locate and read at least three additional primary sources cited in this book and use them in your analysis.** Choose sources that are pertinent to your topic and manageable. You will find the citation information in the back of the book. Locate and read these sources early, as they will no doubt be extensive and possibly dense. Although I am requiring you to read the articles/works of

three sources cited by Milner, Milner, and Mitchell, your analysis is not restricted to these sources alone. You may use ideas from additional theorists included in *Bridging English* or from other CAL Theory and Methods courses (ENGL 374 and ENGL 484) if you wish to do so. Please note that although Milner, Milner, and Mitchell cite Atwell's older version of *In the Middle*, you may use the new one in place of it. Likewise, Milner, Milner, and Mitchell cite Gallagher's older text, *Teaching Adolescent Writers*, for which you may substitute his newer book, *Write Like This*. **The best papers will use sources that focus specifically on CAL instruction.**

Your analysis should demonstrate a deep and accurate understanding of the theoretical perspectives presented by Milner, Milner, and Mitchell and the sources you have selected.

Length of analysis: 4-6 pages, following short paper format and MLA documentation style.
(beyond 4 pages but not in excess of 6 pages)

Notes:

This is one paper with two parts. This means you must:

- (a) Follow the format for short papers
- (b) Type the heading on the first page of the memoir
- (c) Begin a new page for your analysis and locate it immediately following your memoir (page 5 or 6 or whatever).
- (d) The analysis essay will have its own title, but do **not** write a new header in the top left corner.

To submit:

Submit in folder on D2L, and label the polished version "Final." Also submit earlier drafts with peer feedback in the margins. Label earlier drafts and identify peer reviewer (e.g. "Draft 1 reviewed by Quinn Addison," "Draft 2 reviewed by Finley Justice," and so on.)

Grading standards on following page.

Grading:

In order to earn a passing grade, your paper must meet the guidelines outlined in this assignment.

A:

An A paper is one which would move your instructor and the best members of your class to admiration. It implies not only that the essay is virtually free of mechanical, grammatical, documentation, and formatting errors, but that it makes its point clearly, logically, and gracefully. In short, A papers are publishable quality. An A final grade is the product of work of consistently high quality and occasional brilliance.

B:

A B paper reveals effective performance of the assignments. The paper is clear and logical but with perhaps some small problems in coherence or development and without the stylistic grace of the A paper. It has *no more than an occasional error* in spelling, sentence structure, diction, OR usage.

C:

A C paper indicates that you have performed the assignment adequately but usually with some problems of clarity, logic, support or documentation, grammar, mechanics, and spelling. Improvement is desirable, but you should remember that a C grade does indicate average college work.

D:

A D paper reveals a failure to perform the assignment adequately or *to overcome some problems pointed out in previous work*. The D paper is also one that only partially fulfills the requirements of the topic (i.e. does not meet the minimum requirement for length of each part, or does not utilize the minimum number of sources), or one that has a significant number of errors in spelling, sentence structure, usage, diction, and punctuation. When you receive a D, you are being given a warning that you must improve.

F:

An F paper indicates gross failure at carrying out the assigned topic. An F grade may also be given to students who make frequent errors or those who consistently fail to seek out help and correct their indiscretions. It is, of course, a failing grade.