

Assignment 1: Literacy Narrative

How Did We Get Here? Reflecting on Literacy and Your Writing Processes

Readings:

- Donald Murray, “All Writing is Autobiography”
- Amy Tan, “Mother Tongue”
- Excerpt, Vershawn Ashanti Young, “‘Nah, We Straight’: An Argument Against Code Switching”
- Edward Bouelle and Andrew Bouelle: “Comic Book Brothers: A Collaborative Literacy Narrative”

Rhetorical Situation, or Your Jumping Off Point for Writing:

What are best practices for reading and writing analytically to succeed in your academic environment? What have you learned about literacy over your life so far as a student, writer, and member of a community that offered you a sense of identity? What lessons about literacy can you bring to your fellow writers as you join our class and college discourse community? What are best practices to for writing in this community?

Your Task:

In this assignment, you’ll write a Literacy Narrative about your experiences and growth as a writer and a member of communities that use language. These communities can be cultural, academic, family, friends, interest groups, or creative. In authoring your Literacy Narrative, consider what literacies you use on a daily basis, and what practices you can bring that will be helpful in a college or academic writing environment. Then, you’ll share your finished Literacy Narratives with a partner, and together as a group, create a set of recommendations or best practices for approaching the writing process with self-awareness or “metacognition.”

Writing Assignment Instructions and Due Dates:

Thurs 1/31 Defining Literacy: Preliminary Writing Exercise

Define “literacy” for you in a few informal paragraphs. Then, consider 3 formative literacy experiences and write at least one paragraph about each one. What was important about this literacy experience and how did this encounter shape you?

Tues 2/5 Literacy Narrative Outline

Outline of literacy narrative due, in which you trace the thread of the story you are planning to tell. In particular, how did one or more literacy experiences help you get to where you are today, writing in college? What can you share with others that has helped you?

Thurs 2/7 Working Draft of Literacy Narrative Due

Write a 3-4 page personal literacy narrative, tracing your journey to be the writer and student you are now, considering elements of reading, writing, and communication, and what practices you adopted to help you succeed.

Thurs 2/14 Peer Review Letters (2 copies of each letter, plus respond to the hard copy drafts with annotations)

In a detailed letter of 1-2 pages, respond to each author's draft by explaining what is working well, what you think his or her intention is, and how you think that they are conveying their intentions using specific language and details.

Ultimately, what is the takeaway for you as the reader about this author's understanding of literacy and how different experiences have shaped their approach to writing as a college student in this academic discourse community?

Thurs 2/21 Literacy Narrative Final Draft Due (uploaded via the Course Website + 1 hard copy)

As you revise your literacy narrative, consider what literacy experiences are the most important to you in forming your own theory about how your writing process works best. What best practices do you have to offer your colleagues about joining a college discourse community? You'll share this narrative with your colleagues in class, and together as a class, we'll collaborate on a group-written manifesto of what practices are most helpful for succeeding at college writing in this discourse community and what you have learned from each other.