

UNIT 1: Literacy Narrative

A **literacy narrative** is a reflection on one's experiences with reading and writing, and how those experiences helped to shape one's current reading and writing practices. It is also meant to examine the role literacy plays in one's life.

Your Task:

For this assignment, **you must write a 3-4 page (typed, double-spaced) literacy narrative** that reflects on the formative literacy experiences in your life, both good and bad. With careful consideration of the rhetorical situation and genre conventions, your purpose is to communicate:

- How these experiences have contributed thus far to your knowledge of and feelings toward reading and writing, and the literacy practices you have adopted and use today
- What you can transfer from your existing knowledge, feelings, and practices that can help you succeed in your current academic environment
- How your experiences with reading and writing have affected your relationship with the social, cultural, and political spaces around you, and vice versa

Grading Criteria:

You will be graded on: your careful consideration of the rhetorical situation and genre conventions, vivid detail that shows vs. tells your story, the thoughtfulness of your reflections, the attention to language and organization, and the timely submission of all parts of the assignment.

Schedule:

STEP 1: Reflecting on Literacy Experiences: The Good and the Bad

Make a list of the formative literacy experiences in your life both positive and negative*, separating them into two columns. Choose one positive and one negative literacy experience from your list. **To be posted on OpenLab:** In 1-2 paragraphs each, describe in vivid detail each experience and why it was important to you. How did the positive experience contribute to your reading/writing practices today? How have you since developed from and overcome the negative experience?

*You can refer to perhaps a challenging experience with reading/writing, or one that frustrated/hindered your literacy acquisition.

Due on OpenLab: Thursday, 9/5 (follows a Monday schedule)

STEP 2: Considering the Rhetorical Situation and Genre

Part 1—Read through the OpenLab postings, and then comment in 1-2 paragraphs on the work of at least 2 of your classmates (if you see a student already has two replies, please choose another student). How were his/her experiences either similar or different to yours? What is one insight you have you gained about the reading/writing process? What is one useful writing practice that we could adopt in our class this semester and why? Alternatively, what is one bad writing practice that we should not use in our class and why? Please make specific reference to your classmate's post. There should be clear connections between the post and your response to it. Avoid generic responses that do not take into account the original post.

Due on OpenLab: Monday, 9/9

Part 2—Answer all the questions from the “Drafting a Literacy Narrative” Checklist. You do not have to re-write the questions. Answer in full sentences.

Due in class (hard copy): Monday, 9/9

STEP 3: Reading & Responding to Literacy Narratives: Models and Sources

Read and annotate Amy Tan's “Mother Tongue.” Then, in 1-2 paragraphs, respond to the following questions: What formative literacy experience does Tan relate? What do you think was the purpose of her narrative? Who is her audience and how does she attempt to reach them? Does Tan use any rhetorical appeals? Be specific. What style and structure does she use? Does the narrative speak to something larger about the nature of reading and writing?

Due in class (hard copy): Wednesday, 9/11

Read and annotate Sandra Cisneros' “Only Daughter.” Then, in 1-2 paragraphs, respond to the following questions: How is Cisneros' narrative similar to or different from Tan's? As in the previous response, comment on Cisneros' purpose, audience, use of rhetorical appeals, style and structure. How do our literacy practices affect our sense of identity, and how we engage socially, culturally, and politically with our community?

Due in class (hard copy): Monday, 9/16

STEP 4: Drafting & Reflection

Part 1—Now it is time to consolidate what we have been reading and discussing into a full draft of your personal literacy narrative. Re-read the assignment and expectations above under “Your Task.”

Due in class (3 hard copies) for Peer Review Workshop: Monday, 9/23

Part 2—Write a brief reflection that explains why you made the choices you did in your essay draft. How did you account for the rhetorical situation and genre conventions?

Due in class (hard copy): Monday, 9/23

STEP 5: Revision

Following the comments you received during the Peer Review Workshop, write a brief plan that addresses what revisions need to be made in your final draft.

Due on OpenLab: Wednesday, 9/25

STEP 6: Literacy Narrative Final Draft

Revise and edit your Literacy Narrative into a polished “final” draft, according to your post-workshop plan and the revision checklist.

Due on OpenLab & in class (hard copy): Wednesday, 10/2