**Unit 1 Literacy Narrative**

**WRITING**

Let’s start with a definition. What is a narrative? According to the dictionary, a narrative is a “spoken or written account of events.” What is literacy? Again, according to the dictionary, literacy is “the ability to read or write.” So, if you put those two words together, what I’m looking for you to produce by the end of this unit is **a personal or narrative essay** (yes that is our mode of communication…for now) **that describes one or two experiences as readers and writers**. **It is not an autobiography of your whole life**. It is a close-up of one or two events that apply directly to your development as a reader and a writer. As the camera gets closer, there should be many things that we readers can see, so **the focus of this paper is on details, as well as analysis of these details**.

Steps to the first draft:

* You will be responding to specific questions on Open Lab to spark ideas for your narrative essay.
* Each question will be linked to a text that we will use to discuss different styles of rhetoric and genre.
* There will be specific questions to answer. These posts apply ideas in the text to your own life.

**Post 1** – 9/2 – David Sedaris discusses his French teacher in his short essay “Me Talk Pretty One Day.” Write about a positive or negative experience with a teacher or instructor in your past.

**Post 2** – 9/9 – Tyre discusses how one high school changed their citywide writing scores by changing their writing programs in “The Writing Revolution.” Write about your high school English classes.

**Post 3** – 9/14 – Cullington discusses the impact of technology on people’s writing skills in “How I Learned to Love Snapchat”. Write about the impact of technology on your writing skills.

**Post 4** – 9/16 – Maya Angelou describes her writing routine in her interview with George Plimpton. Describe your own writing routine. Even if you think you don’t have one, you probably do! Think about the room you write in, or the mode that you write in (straight to the computer, handwriting).

Each of these posts may contribute to your Unit 1 final project. It is imperative that you complete them before your first draft is due! You should be able to lift one of your posts out and develop into a longer paper.

First draft due **(850 words)** (upload a copy to Black Board): 9/21

Final draft due **(850 words)** (upload to Black Board): 9/30

Consider these umbrella questions as you write. While the posts might be the body of your paragraph, these questions might help you frame your experiences:

* What experiences have shaped you as a writer? (positive and/or negative)
* What experiences have shaped you as a reader? (positive and/or negative)
* What do all these details add up to? (What’s the bigger picture here? Connect the separate dots of your experiences with a common thread)
* How do you view yourself as a reader and writer now?

**READING AND VIEWING**

We will be reading and discussing how others experience language in different ways and forms. We’ll also be watching things as well. Hopefully, all these examples will help you articulate your own experiences with both topics and **also provide some clues about what your final Unit should look like**.

**Possible Proposed Readings (complete articles and essays** :) Links will be provided in Blackboard, but I suggest you print them out so you can annotate the texts.

“Me Talk Pretty One Day” – David Sedaris

“The Writing Revolution” – Peg Tyre

“How I Leaned to Love Snapchat” – Jenna Wortham

“Maya Angelou, The Art of Fiction No. 119” – George Plimpton

**Possible Excerpts (we won’t be writing about these, but I hope we get to them as models)**

*Learning to Read* – Malcolm X

*Born a Crime –* Trevor Noah

*The Story of My Life* – Helen Keller

**We will also be reading some articles about the technical information that is the foundation of this course**:

“Navigating Genres” – Dirk Kerry

Grading Criteria:

* Concrete significant detail
* Analysis of your experience
* Carefulness about sentence clarity and organization
* Word Count: 850
* Whether or not prep work (Posts and first draft) were done

Learning Objectives Fulfilled:

* Read and listen critically and analytically in a variety of genres and rhetorical situations.
* Adapt to and compose in a variety of genres.
* Use reflection and other metacognitive processes.