Narrative Writing: Writing a phase autobiography
What is a narrative?
A spoken or written account of connected events; a story.

• A narrative should:
  – Be a personal experience
• Change your attitude or feelings
• Let your reader live vicariously through your writing…
How do I get my reader to experience what I experienced?

• Four key elements
  – Action
  – Sensory details
  – Dialogue
  – Personal reflection
Narrative Writing Warm-Up: Being Selective

• Include specific details
• Don’t overwhelm
• VERY SHORT period of time (within one day)
• Choose specific details that share the main focus of your experience
• 15-20 details
For this assignment…

• Your narrative must be a minimum of 1 ½ pages typed in MLA format.
• You must have at least five lines of dialogue, but not more than seven (short, brief quotes.)
• Exclude “to be” verbs. You cannot have more than three to be verbs.
• This must cover one day and state the lesson learned.
Waterskiing

- A friend asked me to go waterskiing with him
- It was Memorial Day Weekend
- I was hoping my parents would say no
- I didn’t want to look silly
- Even my friend’s kid sister could ski
- The boat had 150 hp motor
- The skis were huge
- My friend’s cousins showed up
- My first attempt left me with a mouth full of water
- I finally got up on the skis and sailed across the lake.
- There was no wind and the water was like glass
- I even crossed the wake without falling
- I pulled and leaned so that I was running parallel to the boat
- I waved to people on the shore
- I was so pleased, and my friend celebrated with me
- After a rest, I was ready to go again.
Details list activity, continued.

• Now looking at your details list change your “to be,” passive verbs to active verbs.

  Present Tense                     Perfect form
  • I am                     We are                     I have been, etc.
  • You are                  You are
  • He/She/It is             They are                  Progressive from
                                I am being, etc.

  Past Tense
  • I was We were
  • You were You were
  • He/She/It was They were
How do I eliminate “to be” verbs?

• I am tall.

Tower over people, I see the tops of everyone’s head.

This class is boring.

I felt bored to tears in math class.
So how do I start my narrative?

Different forms of hooks:
1. Dialogue
2. Sound
3. Anecdote
4. Shocking statement
5. Interesting fact
6. Quote from a famous person
7. NO QUESTIONS!
8. Can you think of anything else?
Rules about utilizing dialogue in your writing …

Thoughts do not require quotation marks. The thought will get italicized when you type your paper.

• Dialogue is always enclosed in quotation marks.
• Dialogue usually uses dialogue tags such as “she said,” “he screamed,” “they murmured,” etc.
• The DT indicates who is speaking and the method of the speech.

General rules:

• Comma before or after DT to offset from quotation.
• Capital letter to indicate the beginning of a sentence inside the opening quotation mark.
• A period to end the quoted sentence or a comma if the DT comes after the dialogue and must go inside the quotation mark.
• Closing quotation mark.
• Period at the end of the DT.