

Our Relationship with Literacy

How and Why we Write

Assignment

For our first formal assignment, I want you to take the opportunity to think about how and why you write. I want you to explore your own literacy history, habits, and processes. This self-analysis tries to get at what your memories and feelings about writing/reading are and how you actually read/write now. It does not make bland generalizations (“I really love to write”) but goes into detail about how you learned to read/write and the impact made on your life.

Objective

You want to tell a story about your history with literacy. More specifically, you want to craft a story that has something to do with your history with reading and/or writing. Since this is a writing class, it’s so important to really examine our relationship with this complex process. A good way to think about this is that you’re providing a snapshot into you as a writer and/or reader. You want to come up with one good, cohesive story that you can tell from start to finish.

To get started, consider your history as a writer and/or reader. As you do, you might ask yourself questions such as:

- How did you learn to write and/or read?
- Where do you think your feelings about writing/reading and writing/reading habits come from?
- How did you get to where you are as a writer/reader?
- What in your past has made you the kind of writer/reader you are today?
- What kinds of writing/reading have you done in the past?
- How much have you enjoyed the various kinds of reading/writing you’ve done?
- What kind of writing/reading do you do most commonly?
- What is your favorite kind of writing/reading?

You do not need to answer all of these questions, nor should you simply offer a list of responses. Rather, these questions are to help you start thinking deeply about your literate past. It’s likely you will focus in here on one important topic and mainly discuss that.

I am expecting that each of you will write a unique literacy narrative that focuses on and includes different topics and that is organized in a unique way. Due to the nature of the assignment, use of the first person (“I”) is absolutely acceptable. After all, this is *your* story.

As for coverage, make sure to cover the following important issues:

- Tell a story or stories about your literacy history
- Draw conclusions or make points about your literacy experiences
- Talk about where you are now as a writer and reader and how your past shaped your present

As you start planning your essay, make sure to review “Write” chapter 10 (58-61) covering important tips for writing personal narratives. In addition to being a good refresher of what we mean by narrative writing, this important chapter will help you as you plan, organize, and craft your narrative.

Format

- 500 – 600 words (approximately 2 – 3 pages) – typed in standard 12 point font, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins. Do not attempt to play with margins, font size, etc. to make papers appear longer – since you must include the word count, such measures are pointless!
- Final draft must follow MLA format – see examples, *The Little Seagull Handbook* pg. 146-149. For heading example, see syllabus.
- Include an appropriate title centered on the first line. **Do not underline** the title or put it in “quotation marks,” *italics*, or **bold**.
- Write in standard, formal English, using no slang or contractions.
- **Use of the second-person perspective (“you”) is not appropriate or acceptable in this essay.**
- **Do not use any outside sources for this specific assignment.** This should be based purely on your thoughts and ideas.
- Submit your paper to the drop box located in the “Assignment” link prior to the submission deadline. Make sure to submit your paper as an attachment – do not copy and paste!
- **You must save your paper as a Microsoft Word document.** If you are using a different program, make sure to “save as” and select either .doc (or .docx) or .pdf as your file type.

Submission Requirements

- The final draft of your paper must be submitted to the appropriate drop box by the assigned deadline.
- Late formal essay submissions will be accepted per the policy listed in the course syllabus – all late papers are subject to a significant grade deduction.
- Follow the formatting guidelines carefully. Review the notes in the “Submission Guidelines” presentation carefully.

Core Assignment

- The Literacy Narrative is a **Core Assignment**.
- In addition to earning an overall passing grade in the class, students must also earn an average of 70% or better on core assignments to be eligible for a passing ENC1101 grade.