

Personal Memoir

I'm not one of those people who's so blinded by my own work and my sweat. It's kind of risky writing a memoir when you're really part of a larger universe.

Questlove

You will be focusing on one major question as you write this paper. As an Immigrant ,and Muslim, and college students. Using Trump policies.

Who am I in the larger context of U.S. history, policy and social movements?

Below you will find some guiding questions. Please use these as a guide only for your thinking; do not answer them one-by-one.

Questions to respond to:

Who am I in the larger context of U.S. history, policy and social movements?

- What historical events shaped your educational journey? This is not meant to be a research-based paper, rather reflect on what might have been happening in the world that had a direct impact on your education.
- What policies were enacted (or continued) before you entered college? What impact did they have on your experience?
- Are you aware of social movements that attempted to counter some of the policies you referenced earlier? What were some of the ways they worked to either remove regressive education policy or propose new policy that may have affected your experience in school?
- What are specific ways you would like to influence the educational experiences of people at a policy level? What type of social movement do you believe would be the most effective in achieving equity in school?

Remember, a memoir is not a life story. Memoirs are *selections* from your life story, shaped by theme, and driven by an overarching question.

Your memoir connects your experiences in school so far to the experiences depicted in the sources you choose to work with from the above list. Focus on how the intersectional factors of your identity contributed to your educational experiences, as well as how you imagine those same factors shaped the way others (peers, teachers, counselors, principals, etc.) saw you and made decisions about interacting with you, on your behalf, or even without your explicit consent.

Structure

Your memoir should have a beginning, middle, and end, but it doesn't have to be told in chronological order. Memoir works best with creative (but still logical) structure. You might choose to begin your story right now, in your first semester of college, and then tell stories from your educational experiences as flashbacks. You might write those flashbacks in the order they happened, showing how you grew and progressed in your understanding over time, or you might touch on different parts of your identity and tell stories out of time but mapped to those themes.

Details and People

Reading your memoir should be like watching a movie for your reader. Use vivid, specific details to make that happen. One way to include detail is to think about how the five senses figure into each scene -- what colors, smells, sounds, tastes, and textures you can infuse each scene with. Ensuring the reader has a good idea what the main people in your story look and sound like is also key. Experiment with using dialogue.

Concluding

Your memoir should conclude by leaving your reader clear on the significance of the stories you presented. You don't have to explicitly state that significance, but your reader should absolutely know how you want them to feel. Whether you state the significance directly or use literary devices like imagery, make sure your audience knows why the events depicted were significant. Did you leave school and get to college against all odds? Did you emerge victorious, suspicious of authority figures, ready to change the world? Tell your reader the point and bring them back to right now.

Formatting Requirements

- Your memoir should be **no more than three pages**, double-spaced in 12 point, Times New Roman
- This must have your name, date, and name of the course in the top right-hand corner of the paper.
- This is reflective writing, so feel free to use "I" in this paper. Personal stories or quotes are also really useful here!