

ENG 101 – Writing and Rhetoric

UNIT 4 - Literacy Autobiography

Outline/ Notes due Thursday 4/29

Draft due Tuesday 5/4

Final due Thursday 5/6

800-1,000 words

General Starting Points:

In this paper, your task is to explore your history and identity as a *writer*. In doing so, you will need to decide what story or stories you want to tell about your experience and development as a writer and reflect critically on what you have learned about your relationship to writing as a result. As in previous assignments, you will also need to consider how to best convey your ideas and thoughts to your audience: your fellow LC members and instructor. You may choose to take a more traditional academic approach to writing this essay, or you may choose to experiment with a more creative style. Although each author's literacy autobiography will contain stories unique to each individual and be written in different styles, all essays will address, in some form, two key questions:

1. How did you become the writer you are now?
2. How has your experience in this class and in your time as a college writer changed you and/or your writing?

How you choose to approach or interpret these questions is up to you, but in order to think deeply about your experience you should consider the following questions when outlining your paper. You can't cover all of these questions, nor should you try; instead, use these points as prompts to stimulate your thinking about your identity as a writer and your writing process.

- When did you begin writing? How old were you, what did you write about, and how did you go about it? How have innovations in technology or your educational/cultural experiences changed the way you think or approach writing tasks?
- As you matured, how did your writing and the ways you went about it change? Did anyone or anything influence your writing? If so, who or what, and how?
- What kind(s) of writing do you do now or have you done? Have you written a diary or journal? Letters to a pen pal or family members? E-mail, blogs, Tweets, Facebook postings, or on other online forums? Any professional and/or scholarly writing?
- How have you grown and developed as a writer through your experience in this class or other classes at CUA or during college?

- What are your favorite and least favorite aspects of the writing process? What could you do to make your writing more effective?
- Why do you write? Do you consider yourself to be “a writer”? Why or why not?
- How do you see writing fitting into your life, both formally and informally, in the future?

The Goals of the Essay:

1. Produce an account of some aspect of *your experience as a writer*, drawn from one of the “General Starting Points” (or related issues) with also some reference to your recent history and evolution as a college writer.
2. A *meta-commentary* on that account that critically reflects on your experience(s) and draws some conclusions about writing and/or writers that connect to some of the topics we’ve discussed in class.
3. You should also aim to *integrate the form and content* of your essay – the style in which you write should underscore or help to convey the ideas that you are reflecting on in the paper.

*pay particular attention to the goals stated above as they will be the key elements I like for when grading your essays: **experience**, **meta-commentary**, and **style**. See the Grading Rubric on the following page for more detailed information.

ESSAY 4 LITERACY AUTOBIOGRAPHY GRADING RUBRIC

Explanation: The literacy autobiography for Unit 4 should be directed toward a general audience interested in learning about you and your history as a writer. The purpose of the literacy autobiography essay is to explore that history and identity as a writer.

The criteria for the literacy autobiography essay are the following: 1) the essay addresses how you became the writer you are now, including how your experience in English 101 and in your time as a college writer has changed you and/or your writing; 2) you convey salient experiences and events in your writing life in a compelling way; 3) these experiences are reflected on critically by means of meta-commentary appropriate to the genre; 4) the form and content of the essay are organically integrated and demonstrate thoughtful rhetorical decisions on the part of the writer; 5) the writing style is lucid, elegant, and appropriate to the genre. No grammatical errors of any kind are present.

Rubric:

A 100 literacy autobiography essay meets all the criteria fully. The essay conveys memorably and vividly the story of your development as a writer. Accompanying this narrative discourse is a meta-commentary where you reflect critically on your experiences and draw some conclusions about writing and/or writers that connect to some of the topic that we've discussed in class. The form and content of the essay are well integrated and the organization is thoughtfully conceived. The writing at the sentence level is appropriate to the style of the genre, demonstrating lucidity, elegance, and correctness. No grammatical errors are present.

A 90 essay should still be very good, but it can be weaker than a 100 in one area. For example, it may have a compelling, vivid narrative account, but the conclusions that are drawn from it, while thoughtful, are less than resounding.

An 80 essay means good but not excellent. An 80 essay might execute all of the above criteria but without excelling at most or all of them; however, an 80 essay could also be very strong in one area and only competent in others. For example, an 80 essay might offer a striking narrative but without thoughtful meta-commentary or conclusions.

A 70 essay either seriously fails in one area of the criteria or only minimally executes in two or more areas of the criteria. The narrative may be interesting but there is little attempt to reflect critically on the narrative events.

A 60 essay either seriously fails in multiple areas of the criteria or fails to minimally execute in multiple areas of the criteria. Sustained narrative may be lacking, or there is no attempt to consider meaningful conclusions for the writer.

Literacy autobiography essays of 50 and below fail to meet most or all of the basic criteria.

Grammatical and usage errors of the same kind beyond two are subject to a 2 percentage point deduction.