

Major Assignment 1: The Literacy Narrative

For your first major assignment in this course, you will compose a 1,200 to 1,500-word narrative intended as a contribution to the **Digital Archive of Literacy Narratives (DALN)**, which was created by literacy scholars at Ohio State University and Michigan State University. To understand the rhetorical purpose of this archive, consider the following from its website:

The DALN invites people of all ages, races, communities, backgrounds, and interests to contribute stories about how — and in what circumstances — they read, write, and compose meaning, and how they learned to do so (or helped others learn).

We welcome personal narratives about reading and composing all kinds of texts, both formal and informal: diaries, blogs, poetry, music and musical lyrics, fan zines, school papers, videos, sermons, gaming profiles, speeches, chatroom exchanges, text messages, letters, stories, photographs, etc. We also invite contributors to supplement their narratives with samples of their own writing (papers, letters, zines, speeches, etc.) and compositions (music, photographs, videos, sound recordings, etc.).

With readers of the DALN as your audience, you will compose a narrative about how and in what circumstances you learned to read, write, and compose meaning in some type of text you find meaningful. During the course of this unit, you will read examples of literacy narratives, complete exercises that familiarize you with the genre conventions of literacy narratives (such as vivid details, dialogue, story, narration, etc.), draft a version of your paper, have it reviewed by classmates and by me, conference with me one-on-one, and then revise and eventually edit your essay based on feedback.

Assignment Outcomes

By this end of this unit, all students will:

- Recall and describe vivid details through a narrative that shapes and expresses those details for a general/public audience.
- Revise and edit multiple drafts to produce writing that is well organized, mechanically and grammatically sound, and mostly error free.
- Provide effective feedback on the writing of their peers, and both reflect upon and incorporate peer and instructor feedback through editing and revision processes.

Revision Plans

After completing a peer review workshop and a conference with me, you will compose a revision plan (**500 words**) that explains your overall goals for revisions you will make from your draft to final version, as well as how and why you believe those revisions will improve the overall quality of your piece. You will bring this with you to class on **Tuesday, September 11th** for discussion, and submit it to me at the end of class. Completing your revision plan on time will earn you 5% of the total points for this assignment.

Cover Letters

When you submit your final draft, you will include a letter to me (**500 words**) that introduces and explains your literacy narrative. Essentially, summarize what the narrative is about and discuss your overall approach to it. This is a space for you to call attention to what you think you're doing well, as well as those elements of the assignment you still feel uncertain about and would like extra help or instruction with. Additionally, you should discuss the actual changes you made between the first draft and your final draft. These changes may or may not align with your earlier revision plan, and that is perfectly fine (you may discover new and better approaches to revision during the process or revising). Discuss what you actually did here, as well as why.

Due Dates

Rough Draft (to dropbox): Monday, September 5 by 5:00 PM

Peer Review Workshop: Tuesday, September 4

Conferences: Thursday, September 6

Revision Plans: Tuesday, September 11

Final Drafts w/Cover Letter (to dropbox): Thursday, September 12 (any time)

Grading Rubric

Your essay will be evaluated across the following criteria:

Note: marginal and terminal comments on your essays will address specifics for your essay in terms of either major or minor revisions required

Content (30%): essay illustrates a deep understanding of literacy and how the author learned to read, write, and compose meaning through a particular type of text; essay has a clearly identified event and setting.

- A - content overall is excellent; the author hits all the major marks in this category.
- B - essay requires minor revisions to its content;
- C - essay requires major revisions to its content;
- D - essay is incomplete or off topic
- F - essay is completely off topic and not a literacy narrative

Organization (30%): essay displays rhetorically effective and purposeful organization; the introduction contextualizes an important person, event, place, or concept suggesting the story's significance; essay has a satisfying conclusion that indicates why the story is meaningful or leaves the audience considering an important question; the story overall is well told, meaning it has a clear beginning, middle, and end (not necessarily in chronological order).

- A - organization overall is excellent; the author hits all the major marks in this category.
- B - essay requires minor revisions to its organization
- C - essay requires major revisions to its organization
- D - essay is incomplete or off topic
- F - essay is completely off topic and not a literacy narrative

Style (30%): essay is effectively styled as a literacy narrative; it uses vivid, descriptive details, active verbs and active voice when appropriate, and effectively utilizes appropriate tense, tone, and point of view.

- A - style overall is excellent; the author hits all the major marks in this category.

- B - essay requires minor revisions to its style
- C - essay requires major revisions to its style
- D - essay is incomplete or off topic
- F - essay is completely off topic and not a literacy narrative

Includes a correct revision plan that is complete and on time (5%)

Includes a correct cover letter that is complete and on time (5%)

Additional Revisions

If you are unhappy with your final grade, you may revise this project again. In order to do so, you will need to schedule a conference with me and compose a second revision plan. After doing so, you will can submit a new draft that I will re-grade. **Your second revision must be submitted prior to fall break.** **Note: you may not earn back points lost from failure to submit your initial revision plans or cover letters.**

Revising this project can never lower your grade.

Peer Review Workshop and Conference (50 points) - remember that peer review counts as its own assignment (in other words, these points are not part of the literacy narrative itself).

- Student submits a complete draft to the dropbox on time for peer review. (10 points)
- Student attends and actively participates in the workshop. (20 points)
- Student provides at least 3-5 marginal comments on all assigned peer essays for review; these comments provide constructive feedback to peers in terms of macro level issues (content, style, organization, etc), as well as a terminal comment that describes the essay's content, evaluates its features, and makes suggestions on revision. (20 points)
- Student attends and is prepared for individual conference (no points associated with this task - missing a conference with me simply results in an unexcused absence).