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**ESSAY TYPES: NARRATIVE ESSAY**

**1.Nature and Definition**

As a mode of *expository writing*, the narrative approach, more than any other, offers writers a chance to think and write about *themselves*. We all have *experiences* lodged in our memories, which are worthy of sharing with readers. Yet, sometimes they are so fused with other memories that a lot of the time spent in writing narrative is in the prewriting stage.

When you write a narrative essay, you are *telling a story*. Narrative essays are told from *a defined point of view*, often the author's, so there is feeling as well as specific and often sensory details provided to get the reader involved in the elements and sequence of the story. The verbs are vivid and precise. The narrative essay makes *a point* and that point is often defined in the opening sentence, but can also be found as the last sentence in the opening paragraph.

Since a narrative relies on personal experiences, it often is in the form of a story. When the writer uses this technique, he or she must be sure to include all the *conventions of storytelling*: plot, character, setting, climax, and ending. It is usually filled with details that are *carefully selected* to explain, support, or embellish the story. All of the details relate to the main point the writer is attempting to make.

***Unlike many creative stories, however, your narrative essay should be based on fact.*** That doesn’t mean that every detail needs to be pure and untainted by imagination, but rather that you shouldn’t wholly invent the events of your narrative essay. There’s nothing wrong with inventing a person’s words if you can’t remember them exactly, but you shouldn’t say they said something they weren’t even close to saying.

The important thing to remember is that while a narrative essay is typically told chronologically and intended to read like a story, it is not purely for entertainment value. A narrative essay delivers its theme by deliberately weaving *the motifs* through the events, scenes, and details. ***While a narrative essay may be entertaining, its primary purpose is to tell a complete story based on a central meaning.***

**1.1.Definition**

A narrative essay tells a story. It uses *descriptive language* to tell the beginning, middle, and end of an event. *Time adverbs* like finally, eventually, after that, later,then… and *subordinating conjunctions* as *before, as soon as, after, when, and while* ,in complex sentences, are used to sequence event in the narrative essay. It has an introduction that engages the reader’s interest, details about the main event or action in the story, and a conclusion that describes the outcome

**2.Narrative Essay Structure/outline**

2.1.**INTRODUCTION**

2.1.1**.*Hook***: The hook gets the reader’s attention with an interesting or surprising fact

2.1.2.***Background***: The background tells the history or what happened before the action.

2.1.3.***Thesis***: The thesis sentence prepares the reader for the main action of the story, but it doesn’t tell the whole story (just a “hint” about the main action)

2.2.**BODY PARAGRAPHS**

The body paragraphs tell the main story. They use a lot of details to bring the story to life.

2.2.1***.Situation***:The situation paragraph describes the when, where, what happens in the story, and why the main event is happening, step by step. It often uses time order.

2.2.2.**Rising**: Action The rising action is the main events leading to the climax. It also uses time order and many details.

2.2.3**.Climax**: The climax is the main action, the surprise, or the height of the action.

**2.3. CONCLUSION**

The conclusion paragraph tells (1) what happened after the main event, (2) about a lesson the writer learned, and (3) how the writer’s life is changed now

**Activity One**: *Match the parts of a narrative essay on the left with the examples on the right.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Hook | a- I learned that many things in Japan look the same as in the U.K., but they are truly Japanese, and we should appreciate them. Now, travelling is more enjoyable. |
| 2. Background | b. Getting off the airplane, and walking the streets of Tokyo, Japan was very exciting, but it also felt like home. |
| 3. Thesis Sentence | c. Japan is known as “Land of the Rising Sun.” |
| 4. Situation | d. When I was young, I always thought Japan was an exotic country with interesting customs. I always wanted to go to Japan. |
| 5. Rising Action | e.I didn’t know that I was going to learn an important lesson because of a simple pastry. |
| 6. Climax | f.I was hungry and I wanted something to eat. I found a bakery, and I saw a strawberry jam pastry. |
| 7. Conclusion | g. I finally bit into the pastry and was shocked to find it was not strawberry. |

**3.Narrative Essay Sample**

**3.1.Example one**

The essay below will help you understand how to create a story and build this type of essay

**Introduction**

The villagers had lost a few goats and poultry to a mystery. The mystery of the missing farm animals spread like a wildfire in the village. Many speculated there were thieves in the village while others suggested a wild beast was on the run. Despite several speculations, the mystery of the disappearances remained unsolved. The whole village was in a state of dismay when the tiger appeared and launched another attack on the village.

**Body**

The prey was not any farm animal this time, it was a young child playing by the barn. The villagers had had enough, they had to put a stop to it once and for all. They organized a group of the bravest men from the village, armed them with shotguns and knives and planned to attack the tiger. They also took a goat to lure to the tiger in our trap.

The plan was to trap the tiger and later kill him. I was amongst the members of the group who left for the jungle late at night. For hours we did not hear anything except the mosquitoes and crickets around us. Then we found paw prints on the muddy ground which assured us of the tiger's usual trail. Thereupon, as the sun rose, we set up a trap using a goat as bait. We were assured that this would catch the tiger immediately.

We had almost given up when suddenly around daybreak we heard the bushes rustle and the leaves crackle. All of us shivered to our spines saw the mystery east coming towards us. We changed our guns and pointed it towards the wild beast. We steadied our guns towards the tiger as he jumped to grab the goat. He fell in the trap. One of the members shot the tiger dead and we rescued the goat safely back to our village.

**Conclusion**

The mission was accomplished. We had killed the wild beast and had emerged successful. It was an amazing hunting trip; One that would always remain in my memory for all time to come.

**3.2. More examples (Topics)**

* First day at College
* The moment of success
* Your favorite summer vacation.
* A time when you got lost somewhere.
* A difficult decision that you had to make and take .

**4.Tips for Writing Narrative Essays**

Narrative essays can be a lot of fun to write since they’re so heavily based on creativity. But that can also feel intimidating—sometimes it’s easier to have strict guidelines than to have to make it all up yourself. Here are a few tips to keep your narrative essay feeling strong and fresh.

**4.1.Develop Strong Motifs**

*Motifs* are the foundation of a narrative essay. What are you trying to say? How can you say that using specific symbols or events? Those are your motifs.

In the same way that an argumentative essay’s body should support its thesis, the body of your narrative essay should include motifs that support your theme.

Try to avoid cliches, as these will feel tired to your readers. Instead of roses to symbolize love, try succulents. Instead of the ocean representing some vast, unknowable truth, try the depths of your brother’s bedroom. Keep your language and motifs fresh and your essay will be even stronger!

**4.2.Use First-Person Perspective**

In many essays, you’re expected to remove yourself so that your points stand on their own. Not so in a narrative essay—in this case, you want to make use of your own perspective. Thus, the pronoun "I" can be used easily. Sometimes a different perspective can make your point even stronger. If you want someone to identify with your point of view, it may be tempting to choose *a second-person* perspective. However, be sure you really understand the function of second-person; it’s very easy to put a reader off if the narration isn’t expertly deployed.

If you want a little bit of distance, *third-person* perspective may be okay. But be careful—too much distance and your reader may feel like the narrative lacks truth. That’s why first-person perspective is the standard. It keeps you, the writer, close to the narrative, reminding the reader that it really happened

### 4.3. Stick to the Truth

Your essay should be true. However, this is a creative essay, and it’s okay to embellish a little. Rarely in life do we experience anything with a clear, concrete *meaning* the way somebody in a book might. *If you flub the details a little, it’s okay—just don’t make them up entirely.*

**4.4.Use Sensory Descriptions**

Because a narrative essay is a story, you can use sensory details to make your writing more interesting. If you’re describing a particular experience, you can go into detail about things like taste, smell, and hearing in a way that you probably wouldn’t do in any other essay style.

**PRACTICE**

1. Following what you have learnt in this credit, write a five-paragraphs narrative essay about a difficult decision that you had to make and take.

2. Write a biography of someone famous you have known, read, or heard about.

*Where there’s a will, there’s a way""*