

NARRATIVE 2: TSPNFAoS

We began the semester with the Who Am I Here and Now? essay and we will conclude with a similar writing exercise: The Short Personal Narrative for an Audience of Strangers (TSPNfaoS).

In roughly one year, those of you who decide to apply to American colleges or universities will likely begin to refer to this specialized genre as “the college essay.”

If you do decide to continue your education in the United States, you will encounter a grisly set of documents that will include language like this:

2016-2017 Essay Prompts

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from failure can be fundamental to later success. Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
5. Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.

No matter which prompt you choose, the key is to tell a story. Why? Because narrative is the most engaging, most salient, and most persuasive rhetorical mode.

We will discuss the peculiar nature of this particular rhetorical context during class.

In addition, supplemental documents are posted to our Moodle page. You may find these documents especially helpful:

“Guide to College Essay by Katie and Christy”

“Advice for revising personal statement”

Sample essays can be found on-line or in a lovely collection stored in our classroom.

The assignment:

- In response to one of the prompts, craft a narrative in which you are both the narrator and protagonist.
- The event at the center of your narrative must have occurred within the last twelve months.
- Your narrative may not be the same story you told in an earlier writing assignment.
- The story must be no longer than 650 words.
- All drafts and peer reviews must be submitted in MLA ms format.

Deadlines:

November 27/28 Peer Review Draft due

Bring three (3) hard copies of your Peer Review Draft, which we define as the very best work you can craft on your own, to class. Also, upload a digital copy to Turnitin.com prior to the start of class.

November 29/30: Peer Review #1 due

Bring the annotated Peer Review Draft and two (2) hard copies of your peer review to class. Also, upload your peer review to Turnitin.com.

December 01/04: Peer Review #2 due

Bring the annotated Peer Review Draft and two (2) copies of your peer review to class. Also, upload your peer review to Turnitin.com.

December 05/06: Instructor Review Draft

Bring all the steps of the writing process to class. Upload your Instructor Review Draft to Turnitin.com prior to the start of class.

The information about the Common Application provided above can be found at the official Common Application website: <http://www.commonapp.org/whats-appening/application-updates/common-application-announces-2016-2017-essay-prompts>