INRW 0302 Narrative Writing Assignment 1

Directions: Narrations takes many forms including stories about the lives of others (biographies). Choose a family member or a person who played a significant role in your life and write a biography about the person. The paper is to be a minimum of 2 ½ to 3 pages in length with at least 5 paragraphs.

Read the article “Writing Family History: How to Tell a Story for Generations to Come,” by William Zinsser before starting this assignment. A link to the article can be found at the link below.


If possible, interview the person that you plan to write about. Some possible questions or topics to ask or use to gather information about the person that you are writing about include:

- Please provide an overview of your life.
- What were some significant events from your childhood? Why were these important?
- Describe your most memorable childhood memory.
- What person or persons played a major role in your life? (Ask for specific details)
- How is life different from when you were growing up?
- Describe what school was like when you attended.
- What accomplishment are you most proud of?
- Discuss the types of jobs you have held. Would you still choose the same career path?
- What advice on life would you offer to me or others from my generation?

It may be helpful to record your interview (with the person’s permission) to write your paper.

Introductory Paragraph

- Is there a hook or introductory sentence?
- Is there an explanation why you chose to write about this person?
- Is there a transition sentence or sentences?
- Is there a clearly stated thesis statement in the last sentence?

Body Paragraphs

- Are there at least three well-developed body paragraphs with a minimum of 8-12 sentences?
- Is there a topic sentence at the beginning of each body paragraph?
- Are there at least three to four major detail sentences?
- Are transition words, phrases, and sentences used?
- Is there at least one minor detail sentence that further explains each of the major details?
- Is there a concluding sentence if appropriate?
Concluding paragraph

- Is the thesis statement restated?
- Are the main ideas from the body paragraphs restated?

Grammar Check list

- Proper punctuation is used.
- Proper capitalization rules are followed (e.g. names capitalized, capitalize "I")
- No comma splices, sentence fragments, and run on sentences.
- Appropriate use of subject verb agreement.
- Correct verb tense is used.
- Subject verb agreement
- Pronoun usage
- Word choice
- Spelling

Items to turn in with your paper:

- Final printed copy
- Copy of rough drafts
- Copy of interview question
- Copy of draft stamped and reviewed by a tutor at the Student Success Center
- Detailed Outline or web

*Note: Papers must be reviewed by a tutor at the Student Success Center. Failure to meet this requirement will result in the loss of points.*