

Child hood essay

[Family](#), [Children](#)



Today, childhood is seen as a universal rite of passage. Much of our literature consists of coming of age stories that focus on the journey from innocence to experience. Childhood marks the beginning of our personal narrative. We all have our stories of youth. Some percolate in the haze of memory; others are told and retold over the years. These stories—sad, humorous, painful—shape us. They make us who we are.

Inspired by the growing popularity of collecting and recording our stories, students will interview an older family member about a single significant childhood memory, imagine specific details of the story, and then use one or a variety of media text types to present the story to the class. In doing so, students discover intergenerational links through the common universal experience of childhood. Students begin by interviewing a parent (or other older relative) about a childhood memory, collecting enough details to help them recreate the story vividly for an audience.

In small groups, students share information and project ideas, with a view to re-telling the story through one or a combination of the following: print text (e. g. write a story from the parent's point of view), visual text (e. g. memory scrapbook), digital text (e. g. Web page, graphic reproduction), audiovisual text (e. g. PowerPoint presentation with music), or oral presentation (e. g. monologue in the voice of the parent). Students should be encouraged to use whatever high- or low-tech tools they are comfortable with.

This activity affords students the opportunity to discover and learn about the codes and conventions of their chosen media text type in order to successfully apply them to their own production. By re-creating an older family member's story for an audience, students participate in the writing of

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the family history, making it less ephemeral and embedding it in time. Connecting with their parent or grandparent through a particular memory also allows students to view childhood as a universal rite of passage, one that connects successive generations of their family to the family tree of humanity.

A follow-up ELA activity could invite students to use their imagination to develop a story of their own, inspired by events from their own childhood: How would they tell the story to their grandchildren? Students could create a class anthology of their stories or their parents'. In Social Sciences, students could interview a parent or older relative about the social/cultural/historical time in which he or she lived as a child and create a poster depicting it