

Literacy autobiography analysis



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Purpose: To prompt reflection on the subject of language and literacy, to get you thinking about its meaning in your life and about some of the experiences that have influenced you in this area. Writing the paper should help you discover new things about yourself and about the writing process.

The assignment asks you to do the following:

1) Pre-write / generate a variety of “ material” from personal experience; 2) Evaluate and select from the material the most important or significant events; and 3) Relate these events to each other and to yourself today.

Purpose of your piece: To share with your readers 1) your insights about your personal relationship with language (reading, writing, speaking) and learning (in and/or outside of school) and 2) various key experiences (positive or negative) which have affected that relationship [show, don’t just tell].

Assignment: From among the details you develop using the pre-writing techniques discussed in class, select a workable number of the most significant “ literacy events” and describe them in depth (1 – 2 paragraphs each). These events may be specific experiences, such as, for example, a field trip in third grade, a great or poor teacher or mentor etc., a powerful song, work of art, or story. Finally, relate your chosen events to each other (using clear transitions) and to your sense of yourself as a literate person now. Also, incorporate at least one outside text, such as an essay from our book, a poem you wrote, a song or essay which influenced your thinking.

Suggested Structure: You may use a standard “ 5 paragraph” form, but that is not required and is not necessarily desirable. Consider other possibilities, such as 1) Comparison / Contrast (say, between the way you were taught to

write in school and learning to write songs or stories on your own; or between two different schools, teachers, countries, languages, or language communities; or 2) Cause / Effect, for example: these 4 key events politicized my writing. We'll discuss . . . You may include visuals of any kind, but they do not factor into the text length noted below.

Background: The essays we will be reading for this unit are models of literacy biographies which raise many possibilities for the kinds of material you might cover. I will also be posting and/or bringing into class additional material, including student essays and excerpts from same.