

Explanation of The Reader's Autobiography Narrative Essay: 9th grade 1st Semester 1st Quarter

Students were given in-class assignments or homework assignments that required them to assess their reading history through a series of short reflective questions. After reading Sherman Alexie's article, "Superman and Me", students were asked to reflect on their own reading history in an objective manner. Students utilize the responses to the questions to formulate paragraph ideas about their reading history, both the success and the difficulties. They are given some guided help in forming paragraph ideas to help streamline their narrative with the construction of the paragraphs left to the writer to form. This process, from start to finish, takes roughly one week. Emphasis is placed on the completion of the first steps of the process where students answer questions about their reading history and on the editing process in order to have students produce their best work in a final draft that is error free in its content, organization, and conventions (spelling and grammar).

Reader's Autobiography

By this time in our lives, reading seems like something we just know how to do. While some of us are better or enjoy reading more than others, we all have an important story to tell about ourselves: how we became a reader. You may come from a home where the walls were covered with bookcases and everyone read. You may have had a kindergarten teacher who brought every book to life by reading them aloud. Or you may have had a different type of experience, one in which reading was difficult because of a language barrier, learning disability, or you simply found it hard to concentrate on a book.

Tell the story of your reading history, including in your story those details that will help the reader understand why you feel the way you do about reading. Refer to “Your Life as a Reader” for information about the type of reader you are and Sherman Alexie’s “Superman and Me” for an example of what a reader’s autobiography looks and sounds like.

Minimum length: 500 words, typed and double-spaced (after I approve your rough draft)

Organizing your Reader's Autobiography

Some ideas for your body paragraphs:

Directions: jot down ideas for each bullet point. After you write ideas for each, circle the group of three paragraph ideas that you feel you will be most comfortable writing about in depth and detail for your essay. Have me approve your ideas prior to starting your rough draft.

Option 1:

- reading experiences during the elementary years
- reading experiences during the junior high years
- reading goals for high school

Option 2:

- early experiences with reading
- struggles you've encountered as a reader
- reading goals for high school

Option 3:

- how your love for reading began and grew
- what you've gained from reading (favorite books and why, etc.)
- how you will continue to use reading as an educational tool



Reading Autobiography

When I was younger I was the only one out of my siblings that was able to stay still and quiet. My older brother would be always with his friends or playing video games, and my other brother would usually get into fights with four year olds. However, I loved to sit with my mom and read books or even just talk to her and tell her every little detail about my day. My mom loved reading to me and I would always tell her to read some type of animal book or something with dogs. We continued doing this most nights then I began reading to her . This went on for quite awhile until about preschool. I wouldn't talk at all at school but as soon as I got home, I was a talking machine! I really loved to watch my parents cook and just sit there asking questions, it was my entertainment for the day. But when that happened, I no longer wanted to read but rather talk and move around.

When I started elementary schools I was one of the most talkative people in my class, my teachers would always call me the social butterfly. However, I started to get more shy then I began reading. All. The. Time. I was book crazy and was able to read everywhere without getting distracted and just tune everyone and everything out. By 2nd grade I was the top of my class in reading and I loved it. But then something changed. I got my first Xbox 360. I would play it all the time and immediately became sucked in by it. I stopped reading and it started to become very boring to me. I won't say that I regret playing video games (except for 3rd grade

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when I would play 8 hours a day) because I still play them to this day but I do regret giving up my love for reading.

After that, I've never really been able to sit down for a long period of time and read a book. I tend to get distracted very easily and in order to read now I have to have everything quiet, even music distracts me. But there was one book in 8th grade that broke all of my rules. I was able to read that book in a classroom full of people and be able to tune them out. I would read that book anytime I could get my hands on it, I enjoyed it so much and the book kept getting better. The name of the book is *The Giver*. I hadn't had as much fun reading that book since I read Geronimo Stilton books in 2nd grade! I do hope that I feel that way again with the books in high school.

My brother told me about the books we read in high school and they seemed like good books. I can't wait to read Romeo and Juliet because I've always wanted to know the full love story since I've really only heard jokes about it. I started reading *To Kill a Mockingbird* over summer and it seemed quite interesting and I can't wait to see where that goes. In high school I hope I get to start growing my love for reading again. I hope I can write good, interesting essays, and really get to know each and every character and the story too. I guess you can say I want it to be 2nd grade again.

High

This essay received a 4 out of 4 using the district rubric. This essay has all of the trademarks of excellent work. The essay relates the writer's reading history and experience in 3 paragraphs that follow a logical pattern of progression. Introductory paragraphs are omitted in favor of creating a linear progression of the writer's reading life since this is a narrative prompt. The 3 body paragraphs recount the reader's early reading experiences before attending school, the transitional period where reading fell to the wayside in the pursuit of other activities, and the hope for what reading might become for this year. The tone is relaxed as it mirrors the nature of the prompt's requirements and it creates a linear continuum of thought that is easy to follow. Attention to detail is clear in the construction of the essay through the focus on answering the prompt and the minimal number of grammatical, spelling, and format errors.

Common Core All-Subject Writing Rubric						
Writing Type(circle one): Argumentative Informative/Explanatory Narrative (ELA only)						
CONTENT X4	The writing has a sharp focus and clarity of purpose. The ideas are developed with examples and specific details including textual evidence and are thoroughly elaborated. All elements of the prompt are addressed.	The writing has a clear central idea and a clear focus. Ideas are developed with textual evidence, even though the development may be uneven. Information is relevant. Most elements of the prompt are addressed.	The writing has a vague central idea; there are shifts in focus or digressions. Ideas are listed, information may be incomplete or irrelevant, textual evidence may be lacking, and there is little development. Some elements of the prompt are <u>not</u> addressed.	The writing has unclear or confusing ideas. The ideas are missing relevant information, there is not enough information, or there is little or no development, and little textual evidence. Significant elements of the prompt are <u>not</u> addressed.	X4	
	ORGANIZATION	There is a beginning, middle, and end in the writing with strong transitions between ideas. Ideas are presented in a logical order and there is a sense of completion about the writing.	There is a beginning, middle, and end in the writing with simple transitions between ideas. Ideas are presented in a logical order and the writing may have a weak ending.	There is a weak beginning, middle, and end with gaps in ideas. Ideas are presented in random order, there may be significant repetition, and the writing may have no ending.		There is no beginning or end with severe gaps in ideas. Ideas are presented in a random or repetitive order. There may be too little information to demonstrate organization.
	SPELLING & GRAMMAR (Conventions)	The writing exhibits superior control over grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. If there are errors present, they do not appear to be part of a pattern of errors.	The writing exhibits proper control over grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. If there are errors present, they do not appear to be a part of a pattern of errors.	The writing exhibits weak control over grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. The errors minimally affect the meaning of the writing.		The writing exhibits little to no control over grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. The errors greatly affect the meaning of the writing.
	Teacher Feedback:					Total Points Earned
{(Student Reflection on Back)}				Score		