

Writing Assignments



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For AP Language classes:

Write a draft. (Typed, double spaced, please.) Choose from the following:

1. Two vignettes about your growing-up years that capture an experience, feeling, or observation. Possible topics might be places, family members, neighbors, or times in your life that stick with you. “Show” more than “tell” the incidents, allowing readers to experience them as you did.
2. A personal essay that includes a family story. Remember that Elizabeth Stone (a writer and English professor at Fordham University who teaches memoir, personal essays, and autobiography to graduate and undergraduate students) mentions family stories about school, teaching, friendship, love, and history. Consider what view of yourself, your family, or the world you want to show.
3. Focus on a specific period from your past experience and highlight certain aspects of that phase. Look over your life and identify a time when you started somewhere, headed in a particular direction for a while, and reached a point where you decided to change directions. Help your reader to see where this phase started, headed, and ended.
4. What are your impressions of a city, camp, school, or an adventure that took you away from home for an extended period? What did you learn from the particulars of your circumstances? How did you react to people and the place?

For AP Literature classes:

Choose one of the following to draft. (Typed, double spaced, please.)

1. “Autobiography as Haiku” – do two of them. You are attempting to show insights about your life in 100 words or less.
[This assignment was modeled on a column that appears in Sunday’s *Washington Post* (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/>), where writers have 100 words to show a brief moment in their lives.]
(Some comments from class about nature of this kind of work:
focuses on a moment, scene, anecdote, or event; strong endings; use of contrast, juxtaposition, or humor; shows a specific that hints at universality; attention to word choice, details, sounds of words and sentences.)
2. Personal essay that includes a family story. Remember that Elizabeth Stone mentions family stories about school, teaching, friendship, love, and history. Consider what view of yourself, your family, or the world you want to show.