

Narrative Essay

1- What is a Narrative Essay ?

A narrative essay is a piece of writing that focuses on a particular story. In practice, a narrative essay is a story about a personal experience. These essays examine how certain events affect a person's emotions, beliefs, and outlook on life. The writer narrates an event that they lived through, and describes the experience from their personal point of view.

A narrative essay is a useful tool that invites readers into a story and shows how an event has affected a person.

2- How do you write a narrative essay?

Using the writing process when writing a narrative essay will help writers include all important elements of a narrative essay.

- *Prewriting*: Brainstorm a topic and create an outline that sequences the story using plot events
- *Drafting*: Write the draft of the story by adding details and dialogue
- *Revising*: Examine the essay for clarity and create meaning
- *Editing*: Look for grammatical, punctuation, word usage, and spelling mistakes
- *Publish*: Share the polished draft of the essay

3- What is a narrative essay with some examples?

Narrative essays are usually based on a personal experience told from the author's perspective. The essay always has a point or theme, which is the message the author wants the reader to take away. Examples of narrative essay topics include: an unforgettable experience, making a mistake and learning from it, or setting and achieving a goal.

4- Examples of Narrative Essays

Narrative essays can focus on any event in a person's life. A strong narrative essay will be about an important event, one that had a significant impact on the author's life. Some examples of the kinds of topics that a narrative essay might explore are the experiences of:

- Moving to a new place, school, or job
- Events that lead to a new understanding about life
- Overcoming challenging obstacles
- Time spent during a favorite activity
- Being involved in a large movement, such as a charity event or political protest

5- Parts of Narrative Essays

Certain elements are essential to a narrative essay. These elements engage the reader and help the writer tell the story clearly.

- *The story is told from a **first-person point of view**.*

A strong narrative essay lets the reader know who the author is as a person. It reveals the author's opinions, hopes, and beliefs. The reader should be able to gain insights into the author's personality in a way that is similar to a reader getting to know a character in a work of fiction.

- *The story includes **sensory details**.*

A narrative essay is a personal experience, and should give the reader a feeling of being 'there' as the events unfold. The author will use multi-sensory descriptions (such as sights, sounds, and smells) and pay attention to details in order to 'show' the story to the reader.

- *The story will have a point, often expressed as a lesson or **theme**.*

Readers of a narrative essay should be able to identify the most significant event in the story. This event is the climax of the narrative. The climax should lead the narrator (and the reader) to an insight or realization that causes a major change for him or her.

- *The story is typically told in **chronological order**.*

Without events, there is no narrative. A narrative essay is organized around a number of events. These events are linked through cause-and-effect or action-consequence.

- ***Plot** elements move the story along.*

- *The essay is clearly organized to allow the reader to follow the storyline.*

6- Types of Narrative Essays with Topics

a. Memoir

A memoir is an essay in which a person writes about a period in their life. The events typically cover years – even decades. A person might write a memoir in order to share an experience like the topic examples below.

- raising and training a puppy
- explaining the history of a company
- experience of learning to play a sport

b. Reflection

A reflection is a short narrative that focuses on a single event. A writer may choose to reflect on a book they just finished, their visit to a zoo, or their high school graduation. The reflection should focus on the writer's reactions to the event, and may include a self-evaluation. Reflections can also be as informal or formal, like the topic examples below.

Sample Topics :

- a journal entry of your school day
- a college entrance essay that describes an accomplishment
- a self-evaluation after playing a sport for a season

c. Personal Experience as a Participant

A narrative essay of this type is written by a person who was personally involved in an event and wants to share their experience. There is more information included in this narrative essay than in a reflection. It is also more focused on details describing the event, and less on the writer's self-evaluation. Below are some examples for topics.

Sample Topics :

- living through a natural disaster
- participating in a school play
- new experiences on a family vacation

d. Personal Experience as an Observer

This kind of narrative essay includes journalism and reporting. It is the least personal of these types, and may not be written in first-person point-of-view ('I' or 'we'). Take a look at the sample topics.

Sample Topic :

- war correspondents giving an update

- sports writers commenting on a game
- historians describing a past event

6- How to write a Narrative Essay

a. Outline the events of the narrative : Decide which part of the narrative is the climax, and which part contains an insight or lesson. These parts will be the focus of your essay. Organize the other events in the narrative to support this focus.

b. Describe each event with precise sensory description : Focus on details that relate to your personal experiences. For instance, if the place is very important in the narrative, include details about the setting (place and time). If people play a big role in your narrative essay, take the time to describe how they look and what personality traits they have.

c. Describe your role in each of the events : Explain how you felt and what you wanted. Describe how the events affected you emotionally.

d. Identify the significance : Identify the significance of these events on your beliefs, feelings, or world view from where you stand today.

e. The events in the narrative should connect clearly : When you revise, be sure that the events in the narrative connect clearly and have smooth transitions between them
Your conclusion should help the reader understand the importance of your narrative essay.

6- Basic Outline Structure

1. Introduction:

- Hook: Start with an attention-grabbing sentence or anecdote to draw in the reader.
- Background information: Provide necessary context or background information relevant to your story.
- Thesis statement: Clearly state the main point or purpose of your narrative essay.

2. Body Paragraphs:

- Each body paragraph should focus on a specific event or aspect of your narrative.
- Use chronological order: Arrange events in the order they occurred to maintain clarity and coherence.
- Include vivid descriptions: Use sensory details and descriptive language to paint a vivid picture for the reader.

- Show, don't tell: Instead of simply stating what happened, show the reader through actions, dialogue, and emotions.
- Transition smoothly between paragraphs: Use transitional phrases or sentences to connect different parts of your story.

3. **Conclusion:**

- Reflect on the significance of the story: Discuss the lessons learned, insights gained, or the impact of the experience.
- Tie back to the thesis: Connect the conclusion back to the main point or purpose stated in the introduction.
- Leave a lasting impression: End with a memorable closing thought or reflection that leaves the reader thinking.

*Example outline for a narrative essay about : **A memorable childhood experience***

I. Introduction

- Hook: "I can still feel the warm sand between my toes, hear the sound of crashing waves, and taste the salty sea breeze..."
- Background information: Briefly introduce the setting and context of the story (e.g., family vacation to the beach).
- Thesis statement: "This unforgettable trip taught me the importance of family bonding and the beauty of living in the moment."

II. Body Paragraphs

1- Arrival at the beach

- Description of the excitement and anticipation.
- Setting the scene with sensory details.

2- Building sandcastles with family

- Detailing the joy of building sandcastles with siblings and parents.
- Dialogue and interactions among family members.

3- Unexpected rainstorm

- Describing the sudden change in weather and the chaos that ensued.
- Emphasizing how the family came together to seek shelter and make the best of the situation.

III. Conclusion

- Reflecting on the experience and its impact on the narrator.

- Tying back to the thesis by discussing the importance of cherishing moments with loved ones.
- Closing thought: "As I look back on that rainy day at the beach, I realize that it's not about the perfect weather or flawless plans, but about the memories we create and the bonds we share with those we love."