



Research, Write, Publish | Narrative Writing

Narrative Style



Key Concept

Have you ever told a story to someone? Did you capture the attention of your audience? Did they learn anything from your story? Being able to tell a story well is an important communication skill.

The narrative style of writing helps you tell an interesting and meaningful story. A narrative essay tells a story about events that someone experiences. You can tell a story about something that happened to you. You can also research something that happened to someone else and tell a story about that person's experiences.

What can readers learn from a story? A well-written narrative uses personal thoughts to give a story more feeling. Specific details help readers visualize what happens in a story. A narrative essay should help readers understand the events in a story as if they were experiencing the events.

Look Ahead

Task: Read and analyze a narrative essay.

Goal: Show that you know what makes a good narrative essay.

You may want to review an example of a *narrative analysis* before you begin.

See the example:
[Narrative Analysis of Swimming Lessons](#)



Vocabulary

Words to Remember

This page gives basic definitions for some important terms that can help you learn about narrative writing. You can get a more complete definition of each term from [Fact Monster](#)*.

New Words

Character: A person in a story who can be identified by particular looks or behavior.

Descriptive: A type of writing that uses words to separate a person, place, thing, or event from other similar people, places, things, or events.

Dialogue: A type of writing that tells a story in the words of two or more characters who talk to each other.

Essay: A short written work that makes an important point about a particular topic.

First Person: A type of writing that tells a story by using pronouns that refer to the author of the story, such as *I* and *we*.

Literacy: The ability to gather information and communicate knowledge, such as by reading and writing; the state of being *literate*.

Narrate: Tell a story.

Narrative: A type of writing that tells a story about events that someone experiences.

Narrator: The person who tells a story.

Objective: Able to put aside personal feelings and opinions.

Third Person: A type of writing that tells a story by using pronouns that refer to a character or characters in the story, such as *he*, *she*, or *they*.



Exploration

Learning from the Web

Explore some Web sites about the narrative style of writing. Learn when and how to use the narrative style to write an essay.

While you explore the following Web sites, think about the guiding questions. You may want to take notes to help you answer the questions. If you think of other questions about the narrative style of writing, keep those in mind too.

Guiding Questions

- What are some good reasons to write a narrative essay?
- When would narrative writing not be a good choice for an essay?
- How is a narrative essay different from other writing you may have done?

Web Sites

- [Narrative Essays*](#) from [Fact Monster*](#)
- [Narrative Essays and Prompts*](#) from [The Five Paragraph Essay*](#)
- [Narrative Essay*](#) from [Essay Info*](#)



Information

What to Know

This page summarizes some of the information from the Web sites you explored. This information helps you learn what you need to know for this activity about narrative writing. You may want to take notes to help you remember the most important points. You can return to the Web sites for more exploration if you want to learn more.

Why Narrative Writing?

An *essay* is a short written work that makes an important point about a topic chosen by the author. A *narrative essay* is a short written work that makes an important point by telling a story. The narrative style of writing is a good choice when you want to write about an important event.

A *personal narrative* tells a story about events the author experienced or witnessed. An author may also research the experiences of someone else and tell a story about that person. A well-written narrative essay includes carefully selected details that support, explain, and enhance the story.

A *narrator* is the person who tells a story. You may have someone in the story serve as the narrator. If so, write the story in *first person*. You may also narrate the story for your characters. If so, write the story in *third person*. First person may be friendlier, but third person may be more objective.

Here are some important points to remember about a good narrative essay:

- Personal thoughts show how people in the story feel about an experience.
- A well-crafted story makes an important point.
- Specific details support the main point.
- Descriptive words help readers picture what happens.
- Dialogue makes a story come alive.
- If the essay is narrated by someone in the story, it should be written in first person, using *I* or *we*.
- If the essay is narrated by the author, it should be written in third person, using *he*, *she*, or *they*.



Task

What to Do

Complete the following task to show what you have learned about narrative writing. While you work through the task, think about whether you are achieving the goal. You may want to review an example of a *narrative analysis* before you begin.

Task: Read and analyze a narrative essay.

Goal: Show that you know what makes a good narrative essay.

See the example: [Narrative Analysis of Swimming Lessons](#)

Help Guide

Use the Intel® Education Help Guide to learn technology skills.

Word Processing

[Start word processing](#)

[Add date](#)

[Check spelling](#)

[Save document](#)

[Search the Help Guide](#)

Read a sample narrative essay. You may choose one of the following personal narratives, or your teacher may assign one:

- [Sample Narrative Essay*](#) from [Fact Monster*](#)
- [The Racist Warehouse*](#) from [The Write Source*](#)
- [Giving Life*](#) from [The Write Source*](#)

Start a new word processing document. Always remember to type your name and the date at the top of the document.

Type a title for the document. You may want to include the title of the narrative essay you analyze, such as *Narrative Analysis of _____*.

Write one or two paragraphs explaining why the essay you read is (or is not) a good narrative. Give specific examples of good (or bad) narrative writing in the story.

Check the spelling and grammar of your analysis.

Double-check your work by reading the document carefully one more time.

Review the checklist and revise your analysis to make sure it is complete.

Save your analysis. Ask your teacher for help if you do not know where to save the file. Your teacher may also ask you to print or e-mail your file.

Share your analysis.



Task Example

Student Name

Date

Narrative Analysis of *Swimming Lessons*

I think the story about the author's first swimming lesson is a good example of a narrative essay. The reason I say that is because it has most of the necessary elements. The story was written in first person and it was a true story that the author actually experienced. The main character was believable and his point of view was obvious. The details that were included made the story come alive. Some examples are, "it was a wonderful feeling like flying," "hopelessly uncoordinated" and "stood timidly by". The author also included personal thoughts that helped make me feel like I was part of the story.

When the author said, "learning can be scary" and "it was the hardest thing I ever did," I could identify with those statements and I started to think about some difficult moments in my own life. Timidly, embarrassed, brightly colored were some of the descriptive words that helped me visualize the scenes. The theme of this essay was, "Now when I am faced with a new situation I am not so nervous." That is a life lesson that most people can identify with.

The only element that was missing from the narrative that might have made it even more interesting was dialogue. I would like to have heard the author's own word as he/she went through the experiences. I think there could have been some funny dialogue. All in all, I really think this was a good narrative essay sample and I enjoyed reading it.