

Grade 9-10

Biographical/Autobiographical Compositions

Remembered Person - What This Would Look Like in College

English 1A
Assignment #1
Remembered Person

This assignment combines the writing skills discussed in chapters 2 and 3 of SMG.

The old saying for writers is "show, don't tell." This means that, instead of telling me the fact that your Uncle Bob is eccentric, tell me a story that lets me see for myself that he is indeed eccentric. Describe his actions, mannerisms, speech, appearance, beliefs..., focusing on one or more specific events that illustrate your relationship to him, his personality, and the main idea (Ms eccentricity) that you want to convey.

You will be writing about a person, using one-time or repeated actions and anecdotes as well as dialogue and detailed descriptions of appearance, movement, voice, surroundings... to illustrate that person's character/personality and his or her significance to you or effect on you. The person you choose, and the events you describe, do not have to be negative or unpleasant, only vivid, interesting, and meaningful to you.

You may choose any of the suggestions on pp. 105-6 or those appearing at the end of each reading (Considering Topics) in chapter 3. Generally speaking, you will want to write about a person you know, someone you have had sufficient opportunity to observe and with whom you have had at least one interesting experience. You do not have to have been a major participant in that experience, however - you may have been simply an observer.

Worksheet for Peer Review

The purpose of a Remembered Person essay is to describe, clearly and effectively, a person of some significance to you. You may want to describe the person's appearance, style, tone... as well as a place or places associated with that person. You will also want to describe, in detail, a specific incident (or incidents) that show the person's character, personality, effect on you, relationship with you or others.... Don't simply say, in general terms, my friend is helpful: instead, tell a specific story about a specific time that she was helpful.

Does the writer provide a clear description of the person? Do you have a clear mental image of his or her appearance?

Does the writer provide a clear description of one or more places?

Does the writer provide a clear description of one or more events involving this person?

Does the writer provide a sense of the person's nature, personality, attitude, philosophy, and/or relationship?

Does the writer make clear the significance of the person and the incident or incidents? Is this significance explained in terms that are not too obvious or heavy-handed?

Is the essay organized, with a logical flow of ideas, examples, scenes, or descriptions? Are connections made clear and relevant to the reader?

What more would you like to know about the person, place, and/or incident? What could be expanded upon to make the essay more effective, clear, or interesting?

At the level of grammar, punctuation, and writing style, what should the writer focus on improving?

What final advice would you give the writer?

What would you say seems to be the writer's point or desired effect on the reader?

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