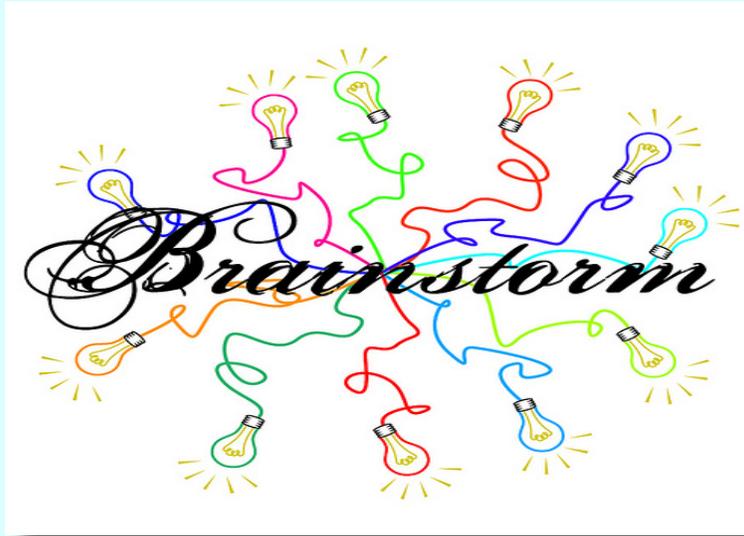




## English 8: Writing: Module 1: Lesson 4: Section 2

Write a Personal Narrative

### Brainstorming for an Idea



Source: week 16 – Brainstorm, Sweet Dreamz Design, Flickr

Personal narratives are, well, personal. The first thing you need to do when writing a personal narrative is to choose one specific event or situation from your personal life as your topic. This can be a bit daunting because during your life so far, you have no doubt had many experiences, made many decisions, taken many actions, and lived with many consequences. How do you go about choosing from such a wide array of life events? One way to begin a personal narrative is to use a chart. Read quickly through the text in the boxes of the chart below. Let your mind reflect on the phrases one by one. When you are finished, go to the next page and follow the instructions.

<b>Personal Challenges</b>	<b>The First Time I Tried . . .</b>	<b>My First Day of . . .</b>
<b>Personal Triumphs</b>	<b>Friendships</b>	<b>Mistakes</b>
<b>Growing Up</b>	<b>Family Traditions</b>	<b>Other Important/ Significant Events</b>



**Instructions:** Fill in the boxes in the chart below. Remember, this is only brainstorming, so all you have to do is name the thing, event, or experience. You will add specifics later. Remember that you don't need to fill in something for each box. If you don't have a significant memory for that subject, don't write anything. This chart is simply the first step in arriving at your central idea, the main focus of your narrative.

Try to remember some of the specifics about experiences that you list. Ask yourself questions like these to help jog your memory:

- Why do I remember this experience or event?
- Who was there?
- What happened?

When you are finished listing your responses below, click on the "Sample Response" button to see possible responses. Please note: Responses will vary.

<b>Personal Challenges</b>	<b>The First Time I Tried . . .</b>	<b>My First Day of . . .</b>
<b>Personal Triumphs</b>	<b>Friendships</b>	<b>Mistakes</b>
<b>Growing Up</b>	<b>Family Traditions</b>	<b>Other Important/ Significant Events</b>

**Sample Response**



**Sample Chart**

<b>Personal Challenges</b>  Trying to learn how to play guitar  My mom and dad's divorce	<b>The First Time I Tried . . .</b>  to skateboard  to swim  to speak in front of the class	<b>My First Day of . . .</b>  middle school  singing lessons
<b>Personal Triumphs</b>  Getting help with a bullying problem  Making friends with Clarisa, the new girl	<b>Friendships</b>  My best friend Danny  My cafeteria buddies  My study partners	<b>Mistakes</b>  Forgetting to turn the hose off  Trusting a kid I didn't know with my backpack
<b>Growing Up</b>  The time I thought most of the other kids in my class were smarter than I was  The time I thought I was really in love	<b>Family Traditions</b>  Family dinners together every night  Holiday gatherings and traditional get-togethers every year	<b>Other Important/ Significant Events</b>  The time I put off finishing a school-related project  The time I went along with my friends and got in trouble