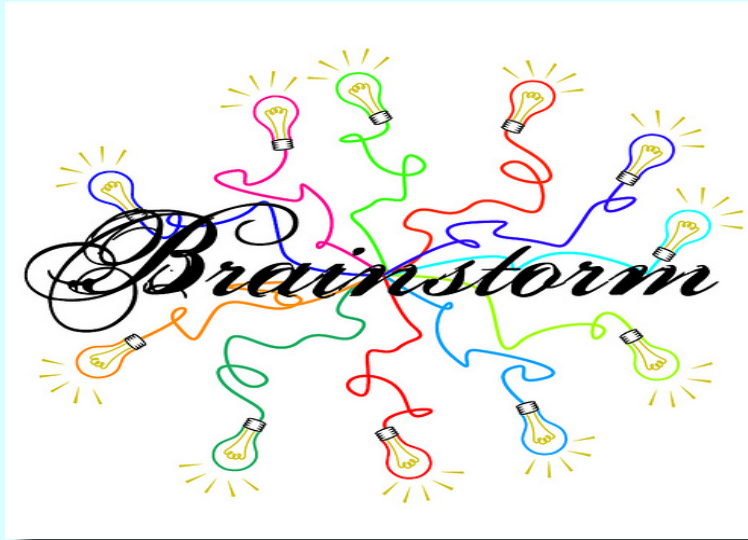




English 8: Writing: Module 1: Lesson 4: Section 2

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.

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



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.

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

Sample Response



Sample Chart

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