

Writer's Workshop  
*September/October*

**Personal Narrative** is a piece of writing that describes a focused, detailed experience that really happened to the writer.

**Writers . . .**

- \* collect (generate) ideas for their Personal Narratives by . . .
  - making a list of important objects
  - making a list of important people and places
  - sketching a map of an important place and labeling it with memories
  - creating a web
  - heart map
  - creating a timeline
  - making a lists of firsts
- \* choose a personal narrative to write about by picking one of their ideas (from the above list) and focusing on one important, detailed moment that they have a lot to write about
- \* pick a seed/topic by asking themselves . . .
  - Do I have more to say about this topic?
  - Do I want to spend more time working on this topic?
  - Are there a few ideas or topics that are similiar that I could combine?
  - Is this a piece of writing I want to publish?
  - Is my topic too small or too big?

**Watermelon vs. Seed (writing comparison/analogy)**

- "Watermelon" would be an entire day or vacation
- "Seed" is a specific moment/event in the day or vacation
- When you pick the "seed" (topic) it then grows into a "watermelon" (full of details and descriptions, creating a vibrant personal narrative)
  
- plan their Personal Narrative by telling it aloud across five fingers (scenes)
- plan their Personal Narrative by sketching the five scenes on a storyboard
- draft their Personal Narrative by cutting out each scene, stapling it to a piece of binder paper and writing each scene out
- draft their Personal Narrative by writing their feelings when the moment happened
- draft their Personal Narrative by writing what they were thinking when the moment happened
- draft their Personal Narrative by writing dialogue (what people were saying)
- draft their Personal Narrative by writing action (what characters were doing)

### **Writers draft their Personal Narrative by writing the . . .**

- first scene of their storyboard, making sure to include the setting and characters
- second scene of their storyboard, making sure to include the rising action (events leading up to the big moment or problem)
- third scene of their storyboard, making sure to include the climax (big moment or problem)
- fourth scene of their storyboard, making sure to include the turning point (how things changed)
- fifth scene of their storyboard, making sure to include a resolution (how the problem was solved or how things ended)
  
- revise by using a hook at the beginning of their Personal Narrative to interest their reader by . . .
  - starting with a small action,
  - starting with a thought,
  - starting with a feeling, OR
  - starting with dialogue
- revise by ending their Personal Narrative with . . .
  - dialogue,
  - telling the reader the lesson they learned,
  - letting the reader know how the problem was solved, OR
  - sharing a thought
- edit by checking for correct capitalization, punctuation and spelling
- publish by rewriting the scenes of their Personal Narrative into one piece, making sure they have said everything they want to in the story and it is ready for others to read