

Narrative Writing Revision

Expanding a narrative by adding details is one of the ways you can make your writing more interesting to your audience. In general, you can begin this aspect of revision (literally "re-seeing") by simply asking questions. Please take a few moments to expand the following sentences into a fuller paragraph.

When I was little, I had a great interest in drawing. As I grew older, however, I unfortunately neglected this talent. I was very pleased, therefore, when I came across piles of my artwork. By looking at these drawings, I was able to recall immediately what other interests I had when I was younger.

Although this paragraph is about art, the reader does not see much. Expand the paragraph by using the cues below:

1) "When I was little, I had a great interest in drawing."

Where did you draw?

On what did you draw?

With what did you draw?

2) "As I grew older, however, I unfortunately neglected this talent."

What took the place of drawing?

3) "I was very pleased, therefore, when I came across piles of my artwork"

Where did you find it?

Who had saved it for you?

4) "By looking at these drawings"

You were looking at drawings of what?

5) "I was able to recall immediately what other interests I had when I was younger."

What were these other interests?

Now create a fluid, descriptive paragraph.

This technique is particularly useful in peer editing; ask someone you trust, for example, to read your paper and then write ten questions. If you simply ask a friend to read and make comments, you are likely to hear something vague like, "it's great." If you employ this strategy, you will have a much clearer idea what you need to communicate to your audience.

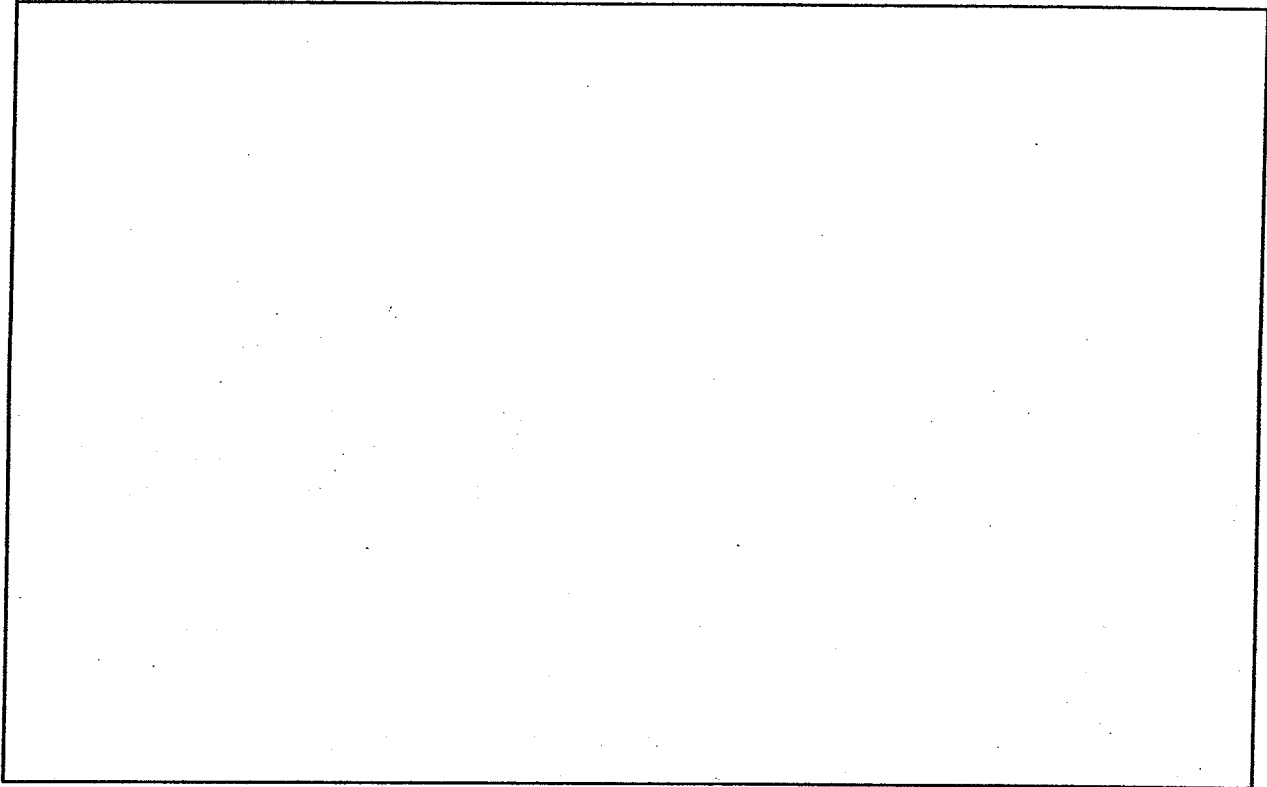
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Steps Required for Writing a Narrative

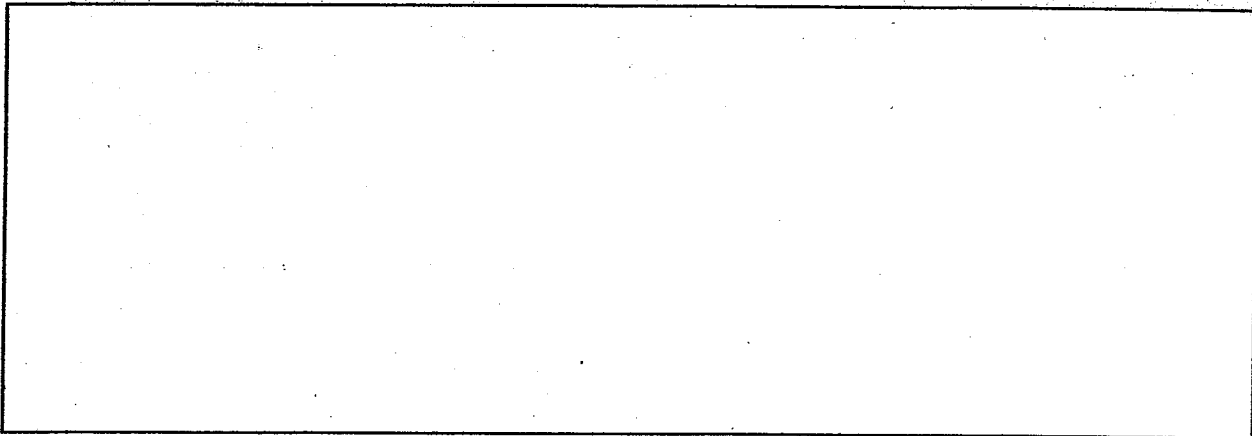
Name _____

Develop an outline for a narrative essay that describes a very specific event in your life. Remember to narrow the topic down to a situation or event that can be dealt with intelligently in a handful of pages. An example would be first kiss, a fight in school, a drive to school or work.

Step one: Utilize one of the discovery pre-writing techniques, such as clustering, brainstorming, or a topic tree, in the box below.



Step two: Narrow the topic to one which can be dealt with in 750 words.



Step three: Make a list of the events that took place.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____
- g. _____
- h. _____
- i. _____
- j. _____

Step four: Circle the three or four events that are most important for the story.

Step five: Put your final choices in the order they occurred by numbering them.

Step six: The three or four events that are most important are your topic sentences. Complete the following phrase outline. Start by filling in the controlling idea for each paragraph. Next fill in the topic sentences in the body paragraphs. Then add a least two supporting details for each topic sentence.

Step seven: Utilizing your outline, develop a thesis statement that 1) asserts something or makes a claim about the topic, 2) concisely describes the topic the essay will cover, 3) provides a preview of the essay's contents, and 4) is one sentence in length.

Step eight: When the body paragraphs have been completed, outline the conclusion by summarizing the key ideas in the body paragraph. Do not repeat the exact ideas, but summarize the information. *Normally it would not be necessary to outline the conclusion, but in this case I want to see how well students can summarize the information from the body paragraphs.*

Step nine: Now go back to the introduction and fill in the thesis in the place marked "thesis." Next, write an opening topic sentence that will draw the reader into the essay. The sentence should give the reader an idea of what the essay is going to be about. Next fill in the supporting details. *Normally it would not be necessary to outline the introduction, but in this case I want to remind students to begin their essays with a well developed introductory paragraph.*

Step ten: Now write a descriptive title for your essay and place it in the line marked title.

Step eleven: Write an essay based upon your outline. Remember an outline is not carved in stone, but etched in Jello. It may be changed and revised if new information comes to mind. That is part of the writing process.

Title _____

Introduction

I _____

A. _____

a _____

b _____

B(thesis) _____

a _____

b _____

Body Paragraphs

I _____

A _____

a _____

b _____

c _____

B _____

a _____

b _____

II _____

A _____

a _____

b _____

B _____

a _____

b _____

c _____

III _____

A _____

a _____

b _____

c _____

B _____

a _____
b _____

IV _____

A _____

a _____
b _____

B _____

a _____
b _____
c _____

V _____

A _____

a _____
b _____
c _____

B _____

a _____
b _____

VI _____

A _____

a _____
b _____

B _____

a _____
b _____
c _____

Conclusion