

Narrative Prompts

1. Write about a time when you went through a rite of passage—a moment that shifted you from childhood towards adulthood. You may write about a sweet sixteen party, a quinceañera, getting a driver’s license or permit, a confirmation, a bar or bat mitzvah, or any other meaningful moment. It may also be the story of the first time you ever did something: a first date, the first time you babysat, your first day at a summer job. Perhaps it was a moment when you realized you felt too old to do something, like trick or treating. Whatever moment you choose, it should capture the shift from childhood to teenager.
2. Write about a time when you stood up for something you believed in, even if the position was unpopular. Explain the pressures imposed on you to conform and what motivated you to be different.
3. Explain a time when you learned something important about your parent. This could be a secret from his/her past, a health issue, or a personal goal. Explain how this revelation made you understand your parent more and perhaps look at him or her in a new light.
4. Write about a life changing moment. Maybe you had to move to a new state or you lost a loved one. Explain how this experience shaped your identity and impacts who you are today.
5. Write about a time when you learned to be accepting of who you are. This memory should explain a time when you realized you were different and explain how you came to terms with being different from the rest of your family or friends physically, mentally, or personally.

In a well-organized 2-4 page essay, you should introduce the memory or situation, thoroughly express your point of view, and describe the sequence of events. Make sure to include sensory language and reflect upon the experience in your conclusion. Remember to use narrative techniques such as dialogue, description, and reflection to develop experiences, events, and characters.

Required Strategies:

- Begin en media res (begin in the middle of the action)
- poetic devices (simile, metaphor, onomatopoeia)
- Dialogue: “Adjust your mirrors,” the instructor growled
- Inner thoughts- (written in italics) *I hope I don’t screw this up.*
- Show vs. tell: My shoulders drooped (not: “I felt sad”)
- sensory details: 5 senses
- Specifics: not “shoes” → red Nike high tops with the scuffed up heel
- reflective conclusion- return to present tense/ present tense reflection