Lesson 22: You Will Learn What a Narrative Essay is All About

**Purpose of Lesson 22:** You will learn what a narrative essay is all about.

**Skills:** Creative thinking, critical thinking, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing.

**Words to Learn:**

- **complete sentence** - A sentence must contain a subject (person, place or thing) and a verb (action word): *The student used a complete sentence.*

- **composing** - writing: *The student was composing the life story of her friend.*

- **connector words** - words that link paragraphs together in a logical way: *Some good connector words are “next week” and “finally.”*

- **edit** - revise and correct: *The newspaper article was edited before it was sent.*

- **indent** - to space in from the margin for each new paragraph: *Don’t forget to indent your new paragraph.*

- **midwife** - someone who helps to deliver a baby: *The midwife had to deliver twins.*

- **narrative essay** - an essay that tells a story about someone or yourself: *A narrative essay is easy to write because you can write about actual experiences.*

- **relevant** - suitable, pertaining to: *The sentence was relevant to the topic.*

- **revision** - correction: *Bella made a revision to her essay.*

- **timeline** - a map of dates or events in a chronological (time) order: *We used a timeline to understand the events leading to World War II.*

- **tribute** - a story which honors a person, place or event: *Eva read a tribute to her aunt at the reunion.*

- **vivid** - very clear and bright: *The ocean was a vivid blue.*
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Directions: Read the conversation below and complete the exercises that follow.

1. What are you writing?

2. Dad has asked me to write a tribute to Aunt Gloria for the family reunion and newsletter. I never did this before, and I have to get it done by next week.

3. What exactly is a tribute? I know it’s some of speech, right?

4. Sort of. It’s a story honoring the life of a person. I will be composing it since I knew her best.

5. Wow! A tribute is like a narrative essay. In school we are doing narrative writing. I can help you and also do a writing assignment. I know it will be easy, because you are a wonderful storyteller.

6. Great idea, Bella. I will learn about writing a narrative essay, and you will learn about Aunt Gloria and her life.
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First, we have to decide on the purpose and audience of our essay.

That’s easy – I am writing about Aunt Gloria, and the purpose is to tell about her life. My audience will be our relatives at the reunion, and those who receive the newsletter.

Next, we have to brainstorm to gather information. I will ask you questions about Aunt Gloria and I will add some of my memories of her. Maybe I will even interview some of her friends.

I will make a timeline with all the important events and dates in her life, from birth to death.

As you can see, Mrs. Mack and Bella have started the pre-writing process. Next, they must organize the information and ideas into the parts of an essay:

- The introduction paragraph contains a thesis statement that presents the main idea.
- Supporting paragraphs (in the order of events) bring readers or listeners on a “journey” through Aunt Gloria’s life.
- The conclusion paragraph is to “wrap it up”.

Write SMART
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Brainstorm / Interview / W/H Questions:

- When was she born?
- When did she get married?
- What happened at her birth?
- What kind of work did she do?
- How did she get the name “Gloria?”
- Where did she live?
- How many brothers or sisters did she have?
- What did she look like?
- What things were important to her?
- What was she good at doing?
- What did she do for fun?
- What problems did she have?
- Did she have children? Grandchildren?
- What did you like about her?
- What kind of a childhood did she have?
- What did others say about her?
- What disease did she have?
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brainstorming Information:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Born Jan. 20, 1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Was not breathing at birth, but survived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Father named her for a miracle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Had 1 brother, Eugene, 2 sisters, Jennie, Ann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Family, friends, religion important</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Tomboy, mischievous, tree climber</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Liked to travel, have family gatherings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Had 1 son, Joseph, 1 daughter, Doreen (both died)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Had 2 grandchildren, Mary, Joseph</td>
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Timeline Information

1. birth - Jan. 20, 1925  4. birth of children  7. cared for  10. car accident
   1951, 1952  elderly sister  Oct. 2007


3. marriage 1948  6. physical  9. retirement to
   problems, back.  Florida 2003

Continued after Quiz 1

Now look at Quiz 2 and compare your grouping of ideas with Mrs. Mack and Bella’s event boxes in this quiz.

Note: Your groupings of ideas are different topics than Mrs. Mack and Bella’s.
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Well, I think we are ready to look at what we wrote and make any changes as far as presenting a picture of Aunt Gloria for all to remember.

Yes, Bella. Your checklist for revising an essay is very helpful and easy to follow.

Revision Checklist

Yes  No  Response to a Prompt (direction)

1. Does your essay have a thesis (main idea) that is clear?
2. Does the essay stick to the topic? (It does not wander).

Organization

3. Does the essay have an introduction that includes the thesis of the essay?
4. Does each following paragraph have a topic sentence (main idea)?
5. Does each paragraph have details that support the main idea?
   Look for at least two details for each paragraph.
6. Is the information arranged in a logical way?
7. Does the essay contain only information that is relevant to the essay?
8. Does the essay have a conclusion?
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Draft Paragraph 1

1 6

Gloria Salis was born on January 20, 1925. Her father had to choose between his wife or his newborn baby girl. He was a butcher. The midwife is facing terrible complications. Louis chose to save Mary; he could not leave his two daughters without a mother. He begged the midwife to work on the baby who was not breathing. It was a miracle, the baby survived. Louis named her, “Gloria”.

Revised Paragraph 1

Gloria Salis was a born survivor. On January 20, 1925, Louis Marcos was forced to choose between his wife, Mary, and their newborn baby, when the midwife is facing life-threatening complications. Louis chose to save Mary, he could not leave his two daughters without a mother. He begged the midwife to work on the baby who was not breathing. Time was running out, but by some miracle, the baby survived. Louis named her, “Gloria”.

Continued after Quiz 7

Below is the Editing Checklist used to edit the example:
Revised Paragraph 1. The numbers and letters above the sentences indicate the errors made. After you review the edits in the example paragraph, attempt the Edit Paragraphs Quizzes 2-5 using the checklist for your answers.
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Editing Checklist

1. Sentences:
   [ ] [ ] (Revise for each number that you mark no)
   a. Are they complete?
   [ ] [ ] b. Are they interesting? Do they have vivid language?
   [ ] [ ] c. Are they the right size (not too long or too choppy)?
   [ ] [ ] d. Is there overuse of the same word?
   [ ] [ ] e. Is the first sentence of each paragraph indented?

2. Parts of speech:
   [ ] [ ] a. Is there proper use of nouns and pronouns?
   [ ] [ ] b. Are verbs in the correct tense?
   [ ] [ ] c. Is there noun-verb agreement?
   [ ] [ ] d. Is there proper use of adjectives and adverbs?

3. Punctuation:
   [ ] [ ] a. Are commas used correctly?
   [ ] [ ] b. Is there proper punctuation at the end of each sentence?
   [ ] [ ] c. Is there a need for a semi-colon instead of a comma?

4. Capitalization:
   [ ] [ ] a. Are all proper nouns capitalized?
   [ ] [ ] b. Is the first word of every sentence capitalized?

5. Spelling:
   [ ] [ ] a. Are all words spelled correctly?
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6. Abbreviations:

   a. Are the abbreviations used correctly in a sentence?

Now it's time to edit the revised draft. The first paragraph has been done for you. Follow the example in the proceeding quizzes.

Example

Revised Paragraph 1

1e
(1)Gloria Salis was a born survivor.(2)On January 20,1925,Louis Marcos was forced to 
2b
choose between his wife, Mary, and their newborn baby, when the midwife is facing 
3b
life-threatening complications. (3)Louis chose to save Mary, he could not leave his two 
4b 5a
daughters without a mother, he begged the midwife to work on the baby who was not 
breathing. Time was running out, but by some miracle, the baby survived. Louis named 
her, “Gloria”.
