

THEME #1: Narrative Checklist

Due date:

* Follow the criteria below to compose your 500-750-word memoir or narrative literacy essay. Then evaluate peers' drafts by: (1) marking areas of strength as well as weakness on the draft; and (2) composing a memo answering questions below with a paragraph on each section.

I. Organization

- A. Story—does it hold your attention with strong beginning, middle and end?
- B. Significance—integrated throughout or well-placed at beginning or end?
- C. Scenes—at least ONE attempt to show, not simply tell? More needed?
- D. Order: chronological, conceptual, flashbacks? Effective, unconfusing?

II. Pacing

- A. All necessary details? Too many? (Where?)
- B. Does story move too slowly? Too quickly? (Where could story be more developed, where condensed for better pacing?)
- C. Enough close-ups, rendered in real time (especially at climax?)

III. Content

- A. Is story well-focused, i.e., does it try to tell too much *or* does it restrict itself to a do-able amount? What would you *rather* hear about, if anything?
- B. Is story appropriate for the assignment? Is it too remote from the writer's experience (e.g., too "interior," vague, non-sensory)? Better for a thesis-and-support essay than for a narrative?

IV. Language

- A. Too many adjectives and/or adverbs? (Give example or two?)
- B. Plenty of vivid, concrete, action verbs? No overuse of "to be" verbs?
- C. Does any similes, metaphors, personification work? Any cliches?

V. Sentence Structure

- A. Did you find many comma splices, fragments or fused sentences?
- B. Are there more than 3 Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) structures in a row?
- C. Is "there" as a sentence opener over-used (i.e., more than twice in essay)?

VI. Mechanics: Circle any of the following problems you marked more than once on the draft: Illogical tense shifting; Punctuation; Spelling; Subject-verb disagreements; Wordiness.