

**Lesson 1** Personal Narrative

Have you ever written a true story about something that happened to you? You're writing a personal narrative. A personal narrative is a true story an author writes about his or her own experiences. Read Nick's personal narrative.

**After the Storm**

It was a weird July day because it was so windy. It seemed more like a wild, November wind, except that it was warm. In mid-afternoon, it got calm. An hour later, a terrific thunderstorm swept through. The wind picked up again and really whipped the trees around. My brother and I watched out the windows.

After the storm, and after a cold supper, Mom said she had to go grocery shopping. "There's no food in the house, and your aunt is coming tomorrow," she said. Well, it looked to me as if there were food in the house, but there are some things that you just don't say to your mother. So, we all went to the grocery store.

The power was still out all over the neighborhood. We started to wonder whether the store would be open. But Mom said surely they had a generator. When we pulled into the parking lot, we saw that she was right. There were lights on in the store.

As soon as we stepped into the store, though, we realized that only about half of the store's lights were on. There was plenty of light to see by, but it wasn't the brighter-than-day light that grocery stores usually offer. And something else was weird, too. It was completely quiet. All of the fans and blowers were off. There was total silence in the store.

Mom, Pete, and I looked at each other. It didn't seem right to talk in such a quiet place. I felt as if I should tiptoe. I saw Mom wince when the grocery cart wheels squeaked.

There were just a few other people in the store. That was weird, too, because usually it's a pretty busy place. When we did talk, our voices sounded funny without all the background noise. The funny thing is, I had never even noticed the background noise. Was my entire life full of background noise that I never noticed?

Ever since then, I have been trying to listen to what is going on around me. When I'm outside, I hear barking dogs or distant traffic and maybe even some birds. When I'm inside, I hear fans and blowers, beeping cash registers, and crying babies. But at least I'm listening.

# Lesson 1 Personal Narrative

Some people write personal narratives because they want to share their thoughts and feelings. Some write because they want to entertain their readers. Some might want to do both. As always, writers of personal narratives keep their audience in mind. What do they want to share with those readers?

Here are the features of a personal narrative:

- It tells a story about something that happens in a writer's life.
- It is written in the first person using words such as *I*, *me*, *mine*, and *my*.
- It uses time and time-order words to tell events in a sequence.
- It expresses the writer's personal feelings.

What could you write a personal narrative about? Here are some idea-starters.

the quietest place you've been  
a most exciting event  
the funniest thing you ever saw

the noisiest place you've ever been  
a most embarrassing moment  
the busiest place you've ever been

What memories popped into your head as you read these idea-starters? Write some notes about each memory. One of these could be the start of a great personal narrative!

Idea-starter: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Idea-starter: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Idea-starter: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Idea-starter: \_\_\_\_\_

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Idea-starter: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Idea-starter: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Lesson 2 Sequence of Events

In a personal narrative, writers need to tell when things happen and in what order. Using **time-order** words helps readers understand events and why they happen. Think of some time-order words or phrases. List them below. The list is started for you.

dawn

sunrise

today

Monday

next week

last night

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Now, use some of the time-order words you listed. Write a sentence that could be from a personal narrative. Use a time-order word or phrase at the beginning of your sentence.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

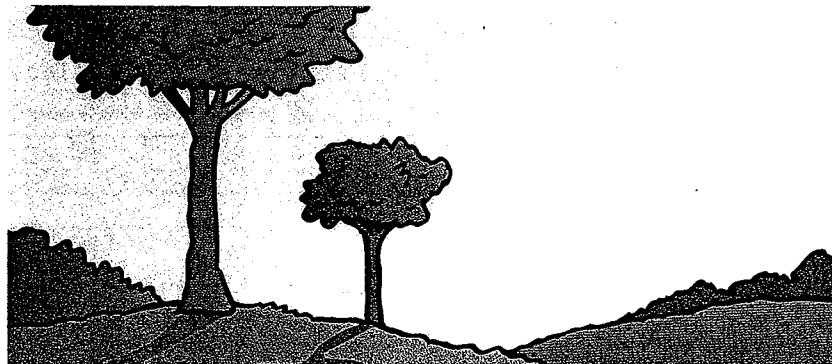
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Write a sentence about something you did last week. Use a time-order word or phrase in the middle or at the end of your sentence.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Lesson 2 Sequence of Events

In addition to time-order words, **transition** words help readers know when things happen and in what order. Here are some common transition words.

after      as soon as      before      during      finally      first  
 later      meanwhile      next      so      soon      then      when

Here is a paragraph from Nick's personal narrative on page 14. Circle the transition words when you find them.

*After the storm, and after a cold supper, Mom said she had to go grocery shopping. "There's no food in the house, and your aunt is coming tomorrow," she said. Well, it looked to me as if there were food in the house, but there are some things that you just don't say to your mother. So, we all went to the grocery store.*

Think about a time when you were in a very quiet or a very noisy place. Where were you? What happened? What did you think about? Write the sequence of events in a paragraph. Remember that it is important to use time and time-order words, but don't start every sentence with a transition word. Use different sentence styles to keep your writing interesting.

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