



*Before we delve into brainstorming for your personal essay, we will learn “nuts and bolts” that help make your story come to life. Today’s focus will be on two things: descriptive writing and dialogue.*

## **So What Is Narrative Writing?**

- Narrative writing is specific and focused.
- It is **not** just writing random facts about your life and hoping they come out okay.
- It follows a specific plot chart, focuses on a single time (or time period of your life) and shows that you learned something through it and became the better for it.

## **What is Memoir Writing?**

- Memoir writing is also specific and focused
- Also not random facts
- May or may not follow a plot chart
- Provides commentary on an object, person, place, event, or idea, and how that thing helped shape one’s identity or beliefs, whether in a moment, or over a longer course of time
- Shows how you, the writer, have become stronger in your mind

## **When writing a personal essay, write with:**

- \_\_\_\_\_: making things exact, accurate, well-defined
- \_\_\_\_\_: comprehensive, in depth, thorough
- \_\_\_\_\_:
- \_\_\_\_\_:

## **What else does a narrative essay have?**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ of sorts
  - \_\_\_\_\_: main storyline, what is occurring
  - \_\_\_\_\_: actors part in the story
  - \_\_\_\_\_: location and situation
  - \_\_\_\_\_: pinnacle of the action
  - \_\_\_\_\_: conclusion of the story → goes along with...
- \_\_\_\_\_: Explore the person, place, thing, idea, or event that \_\_\_\_\_ you into the person that you are today. Spend 1-2 paragraphs explaining the deeper significance.

## Dialogue

- A strong personal essay will also have dialogue.

## How to Correctly Use Dialogue in Your Writing

**Dialogue is a direct quotation – a person’s exact words.**

Ex:

### Capitalizing Dialogue

- Dialogue usually starts with a \_\_\_\_\_ letter.

Ex:

- When an expression identifying the speaker \_\_\_\_\_ the dialogue, the second part of the dialogue begins with a \_\_\_\_\_ case letter.

Ex:

## Periods in Dialogue

- Only put a period inside the ending quotation marks \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ – no words can follow it.

Ex:

BAD Example: “No way. The A’s are awesome.” Kennedy replied.

(can’t put a period inside the quote because words come after it)

## Comma Instead of Period

- If the dialogue is a statement and you can’t use a period inside the quotations because it isn’t the end of the sentence, \_\_\_\_\_ instead.

Ex:

## Question and Exclamation Marks

- Question marks and exclamations can go inside the quotation marks – even if it isn’t the end of the \_\_\_\_\_.

Ex:

Ex:

## Dialogue Between Two People

- When two people are talking to each other, you have to start a new \_\_\_\_\_  
in between their dialogue.

Ex: