

# The Descriptive Narrative Essay

The requirements of this essay are as follows:

1. The essay should be around 3 pages, but at least two (2) full pages.
2. After reading Roald Dahl's short story, "Lamb to the Slaughter," think about a time in your life that you overreacted to something someone else told you or that someone overreacted to something you said. Write a story about this event.
3. Write what you know. That means this essay is about you and the event you went through. You may discuss how this event affected other people, but do not turn the essay into a diatribe against the other person.
4. This essay, more than any of the others, gives you the chance to write about yourself. As such, 'I' is acceptable and recommended. Third-person (he, she, or it) may also be used
5. Narratives are usually linear in nature. There is a beginning, middle, and end. Be sure to include transitions to make the paper read smoothly. "First," "After," "Then," and "Next" are just a few that move the reader along.

## **Important Tips to remember**

1. Remember to involve your audience. You want to recreate the event, not simply tell the story. Use visual and sensory details.
2. Your thesis does not have to be as concrete in this essay as in others you will write, but there must be one there, implied or otherwise. Yes, this is about you, but your audience is still important. The meaning that you gained from this incident should be a universal meaning to which the reader can relate.
3. Remember that although the main component of a narrative is the story, you still must back up what you say. Details must be carefully selected to support, explain, and enhance the story.
4. Remember, narrative form is story-telling form; as stories, they should include these story conventions: a plot (including setting and characters), a climax; and an ending.

# Sample Outline of Descriptive Narrative Essay

## I. Introduction (one paragraph)

A. Background information or any other relevant information about the story in general.

B. Specific Moment and Thesis of Essay (i.e. "I never understood how important it was to learn self-defense until I was attacked outside my apartment.")

## II. Body (at least three paragraphs--do not limit yourself, though)

A. The Point leading up to the moment of realization

1. Detail! Feelings, emotions, observations help fill out your paper.

B. The actual moment

1. Don't forget to recreate tension, anxiety, relief and compare to concrete, universal ideas your reader would understand

C. The results of the actual moment

1. Lessons learned. Add closure to this story. Ask yourself questions that the reader might ask and make sure they are answered here.

## III. Conclusion (one paragraph)

A. Restate major points (refer back to incident and lessons learned, but don't get too redundant.)

B. Restate thesis - don't just cut and paste from intro! (i.e. "I would suggest that everyone take a self-defense class because learning self-defense can help people save their own lives")