



## Narrative Essay

### What is a Narrative Essay?

A narration tells a story of an event or an experience, usually in chronological order. The narrative can be funny, sad, frightening, or ordinary, but its main purpose is to hold the reader's interest and entertain.

### Four Steps to Effective Narration:

1. Reveal something of importance.
2. Include all the important events of the story.
3. Bring the story to life with detailed examples of what happened.
4. Present events in a clear, chronological order.

### Including Important Events:

This is a key step in writing a narrative essay. You must include the important events that make up the story in enough detail for your readers to understand what happened. However, don't bore the reader by relating events that have no bearing on the meaning of the story. Instead, focus on the important events and details.

### Thesis Statement of a Narrative Essay:

The thesis statement usually includes the topic and a preview of what is important about it.

(topic) (preview)

Ex: My first day at my new job was nearly a disaster.

### How to Write an Effective Narrative Essay:

1. **Maintain a consistent point of view.** The events you include and the way you describe them create a story with a certain point of view. This point of view (who is telling the story) must remain consistent. For example, you and a co-worker may give very different accounts of what happened on your first day because you focused on different events of the day. Thus, depending on your point of view, the stories will be different. Use events that reveal the story you want.
2. **Use selective focus.** Don't bore the reader by relating events that have no bearing on the meaning of the story. For example, if your emphasis is on the disastrous events of your first day at work, do not go into extended detail about how you lost your car keys, even though this may have happened. Focus on the important events and details.

3. **Use vivid details.** Use concrete details and images. Describe things through the senses and show how they look, sound, feel, smell, or taste. Try to *show* rather than *tell* what you mean by avoiding abstract words. For example, instead of writing, "I was upset on my first day on the job," change the abstract word "upset" and make it concrete: "I cried on my first day on the job."
4. **Include conversation.** The words of people add variety to a narrative. Write down what was said, and try to capture the way a person really spoke, i.e., his or her tone. The way a person speaks reveals his or her attitude. Is the tone angry, or sarcastic, or friendly?

**Remember:**

A narrative essay is writing that tells a story of an event or an experience, usually in chronological order. There are four steps to remember when writing an effective narrative essay: reveal something of importance, include all the important events of the story, bring the story to life with detailed examples of what happened, and present events in a clear, chronological order.