



## Assignment #5: Narrative Article

A narrative article is a piece of creative non-fiction writing that describes a personal experience and presents a clear purpose or lesson.

Narrative articles are found in both traditional and new forms of media. These types of articles are generally featured on less conventional platforms (blogs & vlogs), but are also featured in some newspapers, magazines and traditional online news outlets. Narratives are used to share personal experiences and attempt to relate to readers, while trying to inspire interest in the overall topic. Narratives or storytelling will also help enhance your overall blog by:

1. Making your blog seem **real** and credible;
2. Making you **stand out**, as your story will be **unique** compared to the blogger on the next site;
3. Grabbing your audience's **attention** and inspiring a greater interest in your point of view;
4. Encouraging audiences to take the **desired action**.

This type of article is based in **fact** but is told in a storytelling format rather than the formal essay format. Thus, the writer may take more liberties in structure and style.

### Steps for Writing a Narrative

#### 1. Choose a Topic

As always, the topic of your article should be related to the overall topic of your blog and/or website. For this assignment, you will be focusing on a **specific event or significant person in your life**. This article will help to provide your readers with some insight into you as a writer. In other words, it will personalize your blog, and explain **how you came to be so interested in your blog topic**.

*For example, you may choose to write about an unforgettable trip you took with your family that inspired your love of travel; the first time you picked up an instrument; or learning to cook with your grandmother.*

#### 2. Start Brainstorming/Outlining

After you've decided on what you want to write about, you will need to outline the key elements:

- **Thesis:** A statement that identifies why the specific event or person is important.
- **Inciting Incident:** What incident starts the story?
- **Rising Action:** What happens as a result of that incident?
- **Climax:** The most exciting point, or turning point for later events?
- **Falling Action:** What happens as a result of the climax?
- **Resolution/Denouement:** The close/conclusion to the events.

### 3. Structuring Your Narrative

- **Introduction/Lead Paragraph:**
  - Briefly describes the setting or people involved in your narrative (3-5 sentences).
  - States the **significance** of the person or event to your life (thesis statement).

*What comes to mind when you think about Afghanistan? Unfortunately, for many the answer to that question is war. Sure, much of Afghanistan is still engaged in conflict, but there is also incredible beauty, hospitality & kindness in the country that does not get reported on. It is far too easy to vilify or write-off an entire nation when you do not have to look those people in the eyes on a regular basis. People who have the same hopes and dreams as you to survive, to find happiness, and to provide for their families. **During my travels last summer, I was able to experience—up close and personal—the positive side of Afghanistan with its spectacular landscapes and its wonderful people; my time in Afghanistan has since become my most memorable travel adventure to date.***

*(from Matthew Karsten's blog: Expert Vagabond)*

- **Body:**
  - Move through the storytelling structure as listed above:
    - *Inciting incident, rising action, climax, falling action, denouement*
  - Consider the following:
    - *How did you feel during each step of the experience?*
    - *What did things look like, sound like, feel like, taste like, etc.*
    - *Who else was involved in the experience?*

- **Conclusion (5-8 sentences):**

A short paragraph that restates the thesis & reflects on the learning that resulted from the experience described in the narrative, and how that learning has impacted your life.

*All in all, based on my travels, my eyes have been opened; there is another side to Afghanistan that deserves more attention: the rugged, scenic mountain landscapes and the friendly, hospitable people. I am not going to tell you that Afghanistan is 100% safe. It is not. Many troops who have served there can tell you the same. Afghans themselves are well-aware of the dangers that plague their country too. Yet, I am hopeful for the day when Afghanistan's problems fade into history, and more travelers can safely enjoy the beauty this incredible country has to offer. In sharing my experiences, I hope I can also impart the following knowledge: do not let our media, which is primarily focused on negative & sensational topics, be your only window into the dynamics of another country you have never been to. Instead, do your own research, explore the world around you, and form your own opinions.*

#### **\*\*\*Checklist**

##### **My final article post is:**

- 600-800 words
- Includes an intro, body & conclusion
- Written in **FIRST PERSON** (I, Me, My, etc.)

##### **My introduction includes:**

- Brief description of the setting or significant people (*who & where*)
- A clearly stated thesis (*Why is this significant to me?*)

##### **The body section of my narrative includes:**

- The 5 elements of a story
- Clear transitions & topic sentences
- A clear, consistent narrator
- Descriptive language

##### **My conclusion includes:**

- A restatement of my thesis
- Summary/Reflection on the event's importance

