

Learning Narrative Rubric

The “A” Learning Narrative. This narrative is replete with observations, references to class readings and discussions, and clarity. Both the form and the content of the essay exhibit care and effort. The essay contains evidence of real and deep thought and a conscious awareness of personal growth or validation. This essay tends to be word-processed, but not necessarily so.

The “B” Learning Narrative. This essay, while above average in some areas, tends to tell and not show. Perhaps the writer was deficient with specificity, writing “I learned what philosophy was” without writing what he learned philosophy was and where he learned it. Perhaps the essay itself was lacking in care and/or effort. Perhaps some observations were not reference, explained or detailed. Some people find it difficult to reflect on what they are learning or have learned. One might reference some observations, but resort to “telling not showing” on others.

The “C” Learning Narrative. This essay shows less depth of thought than above average essays. Either the student has learned little, observed little or remembers little, and the essay reflects that. Perhaps the writer offered little evidence of thought or learning, avoiding or omitting details and references to writings and discussion. This essay could be written grammatically correctly and still get a C with lack of details or thought. Or, there may be evidence of thought and some detail, but the writer loses credibility by not showing a command of the written language.

The “D” Learning Narrative. This essay shows little care, effort, thought or reflection. It might relate what we did with no commentary of anything learned or observed. Few if any readings or discussions will be referenced, few if any conventions of written English will be followed, few if any wisdom will be offered.

Of course, the DLP grade is evaluated half by the essay and half by the quality and quantity of the pithy quotes. One may write an excellent narrative essay, but lose points for poor effort or performance on the nightly and/or in-class writings. Missing and late assigned writings are also distinctly penalized.

The following is an exemplar from a sophomore student, now a senior. It exhibits much of what I would like to see in the learning narrative essay:

I have found that it is surprising how much you can learn in just one week. If I was told at the beginning of this week that I would learn enough to form a well written paper I would've been doubtful, and I would've been even more doubtful that what I learned would affect the rest of my life. After rereading my pithy quotes and reflections I realized I have learned much more than I thought possible. I've learned how to be respectful, that everybody is different and unique, and that there is so much more to the world than what we think we know. These lessons are likely to stick with me for the rest of my life, and affect who I become.

I learned how to be respectful on the second day of class. We were discussing bullying in small groups and I realized that we all had different and insightful views on the subject. Other people in my group came up with ideas that I never would've thought of; some I agreed with some I didn't, but despite whether I agreed or disagreed I respected their ideas and opinions. It's a coincidence that I learned this while discussing bullying since bullying can be defined, in general terms, as disrespecting another. During our discussion I questioned how we can fix the overwhelming problem of bullying in our society. After our large group discussion we resolved that if we all respected each other bullying would not be nearly as large an issue in our society, as it is.

It was while reading "On Character" that I learned that we are all different and unique, and that there's nothing wrong with that. I was reading through this short writing of Voltaire's and a single sentence really struck me. The quote was "we cannot give ourselves tastes, talents; why should we give ourselves qualities?" This one sentence taught me something that I will never forget. I realized that everyone is unique and nobody should have to change to please someone else. There have been many times in my life that I have judged people based on how they looked or acted; things that they can't help or change. I didn't take the time to get to know them or find out what kind of personality they had. I just labeled them as someone I wouldn't like because they were different. After reading this article I questioned why we try to make people change to become more acceptable in our eyes. The answer to my question is the same reason it took me fifteen years to learn this lesson; it is because human beings are naturally judgmental. This is one of our worst qualities and it has caused many problems and enormous amounts of pain and hurt in the world.

On the fifth day of class I learned that there is so much more to the world than what we think we know. We were discussing "The Allegory of The Cave" in large groups and the different scenarios that each group came up with really showed me how much there is to the world that we don't know, and will never know until we experience it for ourselves. For example, in the scenario based on the movie Bubble Boy the movie's main character lived a very secluded life, and what he thought he knew turned out to be false. It wasn't until he went out and experienced life for himself that he realized what he had been missing. I learned from this that I will never know anything until I experience it, and I should keep searching for new ways, and things, to learn. I didn't learn new information; I

learned something far more important, how to find it.