NARRATIVE WRITING

WHAT IS A NARRATIVE ESSAY?
A Narrative Essay is an informal piece of writing that relates a story from real life events experienced by the author. The experience serves as a vehicle for a specific point the author wants to make in his or her essay and includes the authors commentary on the event.

WHAT DOES A NARRATIVE ESSAY INCLUDE?
A narrative essay should all the parts of a story.

• An introduction
• A Plot—sequence of events
• Characters
• Setting or place
• Climax or focal point of the story
• Conclusion

A narrative essay should also include:
• Purpose – The purpose acts as the thesis of your narrative essay
• Point of View – Usually first person (I, Me, We)

Note: Usually in professional essays the author will avoid first person; however, for a narrative essay it is ok.

• Place and time, similar to setting. (Your reader should never wonder “Wait, where did this happen? When was this going on?)
• Clear and concise language – avoid passive voice, wordy or awkward sentence structures, and be verbs (see Verb Power, Awkward Sentences, & Wordy Sentences videos and handouts for more help on this point).

DESCRIPTION
Description is just as important in a narrative essay as it is in any story. We live our lives through a collection of sensory experiences, so in order for the audience to understand the author, the author must use sensory description.

Good descriptions include:
• Details
• Good Adjectives
• Descriptions of emotions
• The five senses
  o Sight
  o Touch
  o Taste
  o Smell
  o Sound

Note: A good rule of thumb is to make sure that each page of writing includes at least three of the five senses.