Writing the Narrative Paper

What's a narrative? Simply put, it's a story. We are comfortable with listening to and telling stories. A narrative, then, is a mode of development that writers might choose to present their ideas to readers. Narration is a common form of writing in fiction and nonfiction. In this class you will be writing nonfiction—basing your writing on facts.

A narration is a deliberate attempt to add interest to the writing by presenting the facts in story form. Narration is often used to relate a personal experience, but it can also be used in historical accounts, biographies or even newspaper stories.

Keep in mind the following when writing in a narrative style.

1. Keep it organized. An effective organizational tool is to write in a chronological order. Usually this means your story moves through time from the oldest point in time to the most recent.

2. Make a point. Your writing should have a purpose that is clear to the reader. A narrative, or story, may be entertaining in the mere telling of it, but ultimately, it should teach a lesson, illustrate a point or merely to inform.

3. Put action in your writing. This is particularly true of narration. Keep your writing moving by re-creating the action as you set it down on paper.

4. Choose a point of view. The choice is of first person or third person. In the first person you are involved in the story as a character in the story. The third person method removes you from the story as an interested and observing bystander.

5. Decide on being objective or subjective. Then stick to your decision. An objective essay uses facts to back up your thesis. A subjective essay gives the author's opinions.

6. Use dialogue if appropriate. Narrative essays often include dialogue as a means of adding "personality" to the essay and also to underscore the main point of the essay.