Standards Focus

Objectives

Students will

- write cohesive and coherent narratives
- use transitions to connect ideas
- revise writing
- refine word choice

Preteach

Write with a Purpose Read aloud the essentials of a good personal narrative to guide students' understanding of this type of writing. Also refer students to the rubric on p. 134 for more information on personal narratives that they can use throughout this workshop.

Think as a Reader/Writer

Use the professional model on this page and others in the collection to provide examples of the elements of good personal narratives. Point out how Paulsen's narrative opens with details about the setting and the dogs' mood. Tell students to note Paulsen's vivid language.

Think About the Professional Model

Possible responses:

1. *"sharp-sided"; "frozen stream"; "shot off the edge"; "flying out into space"; "enter under the kneecap"; "tear it loose"*
2. *He suffered a painful, frightening injury.*

SKILLS FOCUS pp. 126–135

Writing Skills

- Write narratives.
- Write cohesively and coherently.
- Use transitions to connect ideas.
- Revise writing to improve organization and refine word choice.
- Proofread one's own writing in preparation for publishing.

Writing Workshop

Personal Narrative

Write with a Purpose

Write a personal narrative about a significant experience in your life. Include important and vivid details as you tell what happened, and explain why this experience continues to be meaningful to you. Your **purpose** for writing is to entertain your **audience** by sharing a meaningful event.

A Good Personal Narrative

- focuses on a single incident
- is told from your point of view, using the pronoun "I"
- relates events in a clear order, usually chronological
- includes transitions that help readers follow the events
- includes sensory details and vivid verbs that bring the people, places, and events to life
- makes clear what the experience means to the writer

See page 134 for complete rubric.

Reader/Writer Notebook

Use your **RWN** to complete the activities for this workshop.

Think as a Reader/Writer

In this collection, you've seen the techniques writers use, and you've also practiced some of those techniques. Now it's time to tell about your own experiences by using vivid details that will engage your reader. A good personal narrative not only tells what happened but reveals why the experience is important to the writer—and perhaps to the reader, too. To get started, take a few minutes to read this excerpt from *Woodsong* by Gary Paulsen.

There was a point where an old logging trail went through a small, sharp-sided gully—a drop of fifty or so feet—then scooted across a frozen stream and up the other side. It might have been a game trail that was slightly widened or an old foot trail that had not caved in. Whatever it was, I came onto it in the middle of January. The dogs were very excited. New trails always get them tuned up and they were fairly smoking as we came to the edge of the gully.

I did not know it was there and had been letting them run, not riding the sled brake to slow them, and we virtually shot off the edge.

The dogs stayed on the trail, but I immediately lost all control and went flying out into space with the sled. As I did, I kicked sideways, caught my knee on a sharp snag, and felt the wood enter under the kneecap and tear it loose.

I may have screamed then.

← **Details such as these make the setting clear.**

← **Paulsen tells his story by using the first-person point of view.**

← **Use of transitions helps to make the order of events clear.**

← **The author shares his personal experiences through details like these.**

Think About the Professional Model

With a partner, discuss the following questions about the model.

1. What specific sensory details does the writer include?
2. Why do you think the experience was significant to the writer?

Prewriting

Choose a Topic

Use the Idea Starters in the margin to help you recall some memorable experiences that you enjoy telling people about. Ask yourself the following questions about each experience on your list:

- What specific details, such as sights, sounds, smells, and sensations, do I remember about the experience?
- What does the incident reveal about me or about someone else?
- Why does this experience continue to be important to me?
- Why might reading about it be important or interesting for someone else?
- Am I comfortable sharing my thoughts about the incident with my readers?

Gather Details

As you decide what experience you would like to write about, gather the details that you want to include. Ask yourself these *5 W-How?* questions:

- *Who* was involved in the experience, and what did he or she say?
- *What* happened, and in what order did events occur?
- *When* did I have this experience?
- *Where* did the events happen?
- *Why* did the events happen? What set them in motion?
- *How* did I feel about the events at the time, and how do I feel now? *How* do I want my readers to feel about my experience?

To be sure that you recall the details clearly and coherently, create a chart of events like the one below:

Time	Experience	Details
when I was 13	I was the only middle school student to become a varsity cross-country runner.	I dedicated myself to running; I easily passed the older racers.

Idea Starters

- a childhood adventure
- going to a family reunion
- my first day of middle school
- winning or losing a big game
- attending a birthday party

Your Turn

Get Started Making notes in your **RWN,** decide on a specific experience to write about. Then, use a chart like the one on the left to gather details about the experience. Your notes and chart will help you plan your personal narrative.

Learn It Online
An interactive graphic organizer can help you generate and organize ideas. Try one at:
go.hrw.com L8-127 Go

Resources

Writing and Speaking Workshops, on-level practice and assessment, p. 1

Differentiating Instruction, modified lesson plans and strategies

WritingNotes, interactive lesson presentations with activities

GrammarNotes, interactive lesson presentations with activities

Writing and Research in a Digital Age, interactive lesson presentations with activities

Teacher One Stop™, on-level lesson plans and all print resources

Holt English Language Development, systematic instruction and scaffolded content

Language Handbook Worksheets, pp. 107–108

Formal Assessment, Entry-Level Test

ThinkCentral Online Assessment, Writing Workshop Test

ThinkCentral Online Remediation

Holt Online Essay Scoring

Direct Teach

Guided Practice

Choose a Topic

- Draw a time line and label the beginning of it "My Birth." Label the end of the line "Present Day."
- Ask a volunteer to share key events from his or her life. Show them on the time line, approximating the correct time frame with intersecting lines. Ask the student to identify an event that is memorable and record it in the correct place on the time line.
- Have students fill in their own time lines to help them choose an event to write about.

Your Turn

Get Started Give students a few minutes to identify an event for their narratives. Then tell them to work independently to gather details and to consider their audience and purpose as they do.

Learn It Online
The Interactive Student Edition includes more than thirty **Interactive Graphic Organizers.** Your students can use them to generate and organize ideas, compare and contrast, evaluate a decision, support a position and much more. Preview at **go.hrw.com**
go.hrw.com L8-127 Go

Guided Practice

Think About Audience and Purpose

Remind students that different audiences will require different types of information to understand what they read. Tell students that their friends or family may already have the necessary information for understanding a personal narrative written by them, for example, but that strangers may not.

Plan Your Narrative

- Review with students the main parts of a personal narrative—the introduction, the body, and the conclusion—and their functions.
- Explain that the introduction establishes the setting, the narrator's voice and point of view, and his or her problem or conflict. The body describes the events in the order they occurred. The conclusion explains why the events were meaningful to the writer.
- Explain that the Personal Narrative Framework on this page illustrates one student's plan for his narrative. Point out how the writer's conclusion reflects the statement of why the experience was significant to him.
- Have students compare the writer's framework here with the actual student draft that appears on pp. 131-132 of this workshop.

Your Turn

Plan Your Narrative Have students complete the **Your Turn** as independent practice. As they work, make sure they include specific events and sensory details in their Personal Narrative Frameworks.

Think About Audience and Purpose

Before you begin your draft, think about your **audience** and about your **purpose** for writing. This will help you decide what details to include and what ideas to emphasize. Jot down answers to the following questions:

- Who will my narrative be read by? Will it be read by my classmates? my teacher? my family? What information will they need to understand my story?
- Why am I writing about this experience? Do I want to make my audience laugh—or cry? Do I want them to understand something about me or about the world we live in?

Plan Your Narrative

What will you include in your personal narrative? Use an outline like the one below to help you plan your personal narrative.

Plan for a Personal Narrative

Write what the experience means to you: _____
Introduction (in the words you'll actually use): _____
Body (Order of events):
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
Conclusion (in the words you'll actually use): _____

Here is one writer's outline for a personal narrative. Use this model to help you create your own plan.

Personal Narrative

This experience was significant to me because I learned that the most important thing is to do your best.

Introduction: "This is going to be the year for me," I thought.

Body:

1. I prepared to win the first race by training hard, so that I would make the varsity team.
2. In the race, I ran as fast as I could, and only one runner kept up.
3. The other runner at first fell behind but caught up with me at the end.
4. I won a varsity letter and met my goal.

Conclusion: Proud of myself, I thought, "I did my best this year, and next year I'll do even better."

Peer Review

Share your completed plan with a peer. Ask your peer to offer concrete suggestions for improving your plans for your personal narrative.

Your Turn

Plan Your Narrative To help you decide what to include in your personal narrative, make a **personal narrative plan.** Then review your plan, asking yourself which details you should emphasize and which you could add to make your narrative more effective. Remember to keep in mind your **purpose** and **audience.**

Personal Narrative Writing Prompts

Students can choose their own ideas or use one of the following prompts to write a personal narrative.

School Write about an event that took place at school that shaped the student you are today. Include interesting details about the time and place.

Music Is there a particular song that has meaning for you? Write a personal narrative that retells an event from your life and shows the connection between your life and the music.

World Languages Write a personal narrative about a time when you had to speak a new language. How did you feel? What were the circumstances that led to this? Were you new to a country, or lost?

Drafting

Keep Point of View Consistent

In a personal narrative you'll use the **first-person point of view** pronouns (*I, me, my*) to refer to yourself. Be sure to use your natural voice—the words and phrases you would use when telling the story to your friends. Your **tone** reveals your attitude about your topic.

Framework for a Personal Narrative

Introduction
- Begin with an engaging first sentence.
- Include details about when and where the experience took place.

Body
- Relay the order of events using sensory details and vivid verbs.
- Include your thoughts and feelings as the events unfold.

Conclusion
- Reveal why the experience is meaningful.

Use Sensory Details and Vivid Verbs

Because Gary Paulsen wants us to appreciate the action and the danger of his adventure, he uses **sensory details** such as "fairly smoking" and "flying out into space." You want your readers to appreciate how exciting or fun or challenging your experience was to you.

One way to grab and hold readers' attention is to use **vivid verbs**—verbs that place the reader right in the middle of the action. Verbs help set the tone and the pace of an essay. For example, instead of *I took,* you might write *I grabbed, grasped,* or *snatched*. Instead of *We walked*, you might write *We hiked, strolled*, or *staggered*, depending on what you are trying to communicate.

Grammar Link Punctuating a Series of Verbs

When you write a personal narrative, you may have more than one action verb in a sentence. Study the following sentence from *Woodsong.* Be sure to follow the rules for punctuating a series of verbs when you write your personal narrative.

> As I did, I kicked sideways, caught my knee on a sharp snag, and felt the wood enter under the kneecap . . .

- If there are more than two verbs in a series, you should usually separate the verbs or verb phrases with a comma, as in the example above.
- If all of the verbs or verb phrases are joined by *and, or,* or *nor,* do not follow the above rule. You do not need commas to separate the verbs or verb phrases. Here are two examples:

  I played and I sang and I danced.

  Sara will dance or sing or play an instrument in the talent show.

Writing Tip

When the last two verbs in a series are joined by *and*, the comma before the *and* is sometimes omitted. To review the rules for using commas in a series, see the Language Handbook.

Your Turn

Write Your Draft After creating your framework, use it to help you write a draft of your personal narrative. Think about the following questions as you write your draft:
- What **tone** should I use in my narrative?
- How can the use of sensory details and vivid verbs bring the experience to life?
- Have I used commas correctly with series of action verbs?

Guided Practice

Use Sensory Details and Vivid Verbs

- Remind students that vivid language should catch readers' interest and immediately bring certain images or ideas to mind.
- As a class, generate a list of verbs that students use regularly, such as *go, eat, think,* and *say.* Write them on the board. Then, have students think of vivid equivalents, such as *hurry, devour, ponder,* and *explain.*
- Ask volunteers to make up and share sentences that use the vivid verbs. Then substitute the vivid verbs with the "ordinary" ones. Ask students to explain how each verb affects the feeling of the sentence.

Grammar Link

Have students punctuate the series of verbs in the sentences below.

1. I leaped up hit the ground and raced with all my might. [*I leaped up, hit the ground, and raced with all my might.*]
2. I maintained my speed, and conserved my energy, and won the race. [*I maintained my speed and conserved my energy and won the race.*]
3. During a race, you must clear your mind stay focused and breathe steadily. [*During a race, you must clear your mind, stay focused, and breathe steadily.*]

Elements of Language, First Course

Warriner's Handbook, First Course

Your Turn

Write Your Draft Have students complete the **Your Turn** as independent practice. Remind students to use their completed Personal Narrative Frameworks as they begin to draft their narratives. Suggest that students write their drafts on every other line so that revisions can be made more easily later.

Differentiating Instruction

English-Language Learners

Use the assignment as a vocabulary building opportunity. Have students meet in small groups to generate a list of words or phrases that convey sensory details. Remind students that they can visualize sensory details they have experienced. They can also ask questions such as the following: How might something look, feel, taste, smell, or sound?

Writers Gaining Proficiency

Have students meet with partners to help them organize their writing. Tell them to describe a significant event. As students talk, their partners should take notes about which details belong to the beginning, middle, and end of the event. Tell students to plug the notes into the body section of their partner's Personal Narrative Frameworks.

Advanced Learners

Acceleration Challenge students to begin their narratives at a point in the middle or even at the end and then tell part or all of their narratives in a flashback. Before beginning, ask them to discuss books or movies that use flashback and what it adds to the experience of reading or viewing.

Guided Practice

Model and Apply

- Using a student draft on a transparency, model how to use the questions, tips, and revision techniques suggested in the chart. You might use a student's personal narrative or a personal narrative of your own to evaluate and revise using the steps in the chart.
- Ask volunteers to demonstrate using each of the steps on their own personal narratives.

Peer Review

Have students meet with peers to review their personal narratives. After reading each other's drafts, students should answer the following question: Why was my partner's experience significant? If students can't answer the question, have them tell their partners and work together to add details and information that explain why the event is important.

Holt Six Traits for Writing, rubrics, prompts, and sample papers

Peer Review

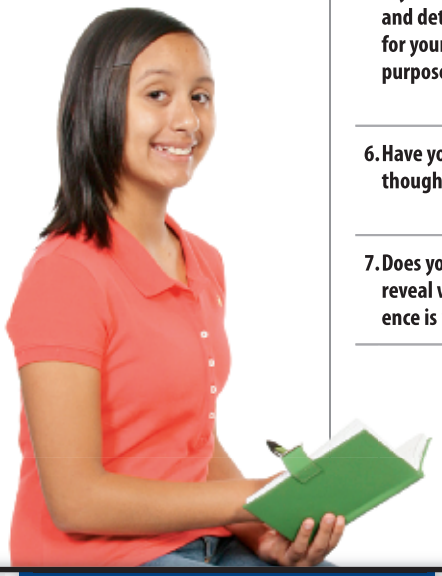
Work with a partner and review each other's drafts. Answer each question on the chart to the right to see how you could improve your drafts. Be sure to take notes about what your partner suggests.

Evaluating and Revising

Read the questions in the left column of the chart, and use the tips in the middle column to make revisions to your personal narrative. The right column suggests techniques that you can use to revise your draft.

Personal Narrative: Guidelines for Content and Organization

Evaluation Questions	Tips	Revision Techniques
1. Does your introduction grab your reader's attention and set the scene?	**Put stars** next to interesting statements. **Circle** details that show when and where the experience happened.	**Add** an attention-getting quotation or statement. **Add** details about where and when the event took place.
2. Are events in chronological order?	**Number the events.** Check that the sequence shows the actual order of events.	**Rearrange** events in the order in which they occurred. **Add** transitions to link events.
3. Are the details describing people, places, and events vivid and precise?	**Highlight** sensory details. In the margin, note which senses the sensory details appeal to.	**Elaborate** with sensory details, if necessary. **Delete** irrelevant details.
4. Have you used vivid action verbs?	**Circle** vivid verbs.	**Replace** vague, passive verbs with vivid verbs.
5. Is your choice of words and details appropriate for your audience and purpose?	**Put a box around** difficult or technical words. **Put brackets around** passages that do not support your purpose.	**Replace** difficult words with easier ones, or add explanations. **Rephrase** passages to help you achieve your purpose.
6. Have you included your thoughts and feelings?	**Put a check mark** next to statements of your feelings and thoughts.	**Add** specific details about feelings and thoughts, if necessary.
7. Does your conclusion reveal why the experience is meaningful?	**Underline** your statement about why the experience is meaningful.	**Add** a statement that explains why the experience is important to you.



Research to Practice

Holt Professional Learning for Language Arts

To watch videos on teaching **revision, grammar,** and **on-demand writing skills** featuring Linda Rief, Amy Benjamin, and Leila Christenbury, go to this page in the **Interactive Teacher's Edition.**

Read this student's draft, the comments on its structure, and some suggestions for how the narrative could be made even stronger.

Student Draft

Today Is the Day

by Alex Bloom, Gray Middle School

"This is going to be the year for me," I thought. To achieve the standards I set for myself, I worked out every spare minute. As the season progressed, I focused even more on my running, securing a position on the school's track team. But I wanted more. Determined to be the only varsity cross-country runner from middle school, I pushed myself the extra mile. I made running part of my daily routine. I drank, ate, and slept running. I was determined to be prepared to win the first race of the year.

Bang! The race began. "I can do this," I thought. I quickly passed most of the racers from the other teams, putting myself in the front of the pack. My hair blew from side to side in the wind, and my uniform was no longer neat. I sped past the rest of the racers, leaving them behind. Only one runner stayed with me throughout the race. We flew around every turn with speed and precision, competing, challenging each other. He fell back as I powered up the hill, I moved ahead, gaining distance. I turned into the final corner.

← The student's first-person **point of view** is established right away and maintained throughout the narrative.

← The experience of the race highlights the personal narrative. **Vivid verbs** help create a sense of action and forward movement.

MINI-LESSON **How to Add Descriptive Details**

Notice that Alex's description of the race doesn't really help readers picture it. Alex might add details to the second paragraph to make the descriptions even more vivid to the reader.

Alex's Revision of Paragraph Two

Bang! The race began. "I can do this," I thought. I quickly passed most of the racers from the other teams, putting myself in the front of the pack. My hair blew from side to side in the wind, and my uniform was no longer neat. I sped past the rest of the racers, leaving them behind. Only one runner stayed with me throughout the race.

Your Turn

Add Details Read your draft and then ask yourself: What sensory details and descriptive information would help my readers picture events better?

Differentiating Instruction

Learners with Diverse Needs

Have students work in pairs to help each other visualize a scene or event from their narratives that needs more detail or description. Have one student sit with eyes closed while the other asks questions, such as the following: "What do you see?" "What do you hear?" "What do you sense under your feet or in your hands?" "Do you taste or smell anything?" Tell the listening student to take notes as the visualizing partner answers the questions.

Guided Practice

Student Draft

Explain that the Student Draft on this page is written by the same student who completed the Personal Narrative Framework on p. 128. Model reading the draft and the annotations in blue, and explain that the yellow highlighting illustrates the student's language choices. Explain that a mini-lesson follows with helpful information about ways to improve this draft as well as their own.

Mini-Lesson

How to Add Descriptive Details

- Remind students that details help readers imagine or picture what is happening in a narrative. Sensory details in particular help readers understand what something looked, sounded, smelled, felt, or tasted like.
- Point out that the student writer has revised his draft to include details that appeal to the sense of sight ("bright red uniform"; "drenched in sweat"). Read the first draft and revision aloud. Then ask students to comment on the differences the added details make.

Your Turn

Add Details As students complete the **Your Turn,** have them mark with stars at least two places in their drafts where they could add sensory details or other descriptive information. Challenge them to add details that appeal to more than one sense. Remind students to use the **Grammar Link** on p. 129 if they have sentences that contain a series of verbs.

Guided Practice

Student Draft

- Explain that the Student Draft is continued and completed on this page. Again the draft is annotated and highlighted for the students.
- Read the draft and annotations aloud and discuss. Refer students to the model Personal Narrative Framework on p. 128. Ask students to comment on whether the student writer followed the framework.

Mini-Lesson

How to Add Transitions

- Remind students that transitional words and phrases help readers see the connections between events in a narrative. Point out that readers will enjoy a narrative more if they don't have to stop to figure out the order in which events took place.
- Explain that the writer has revised his draft to include the following transition words and phrase: *after, when, later that month,* and *soon*. Read aloud the student's first draft and then compare it to the revised draft. Ask students to comment on which version is more effective and why.

Your Turn

Add Transitions Tell students to read over their drafts and mark with a star at least three places where they can add transitions to make their ideas flow more logically.

Student Draft *continues*

After writing the **climax** of the narrative, Alex reflects on what it means.

I stepped carefully on the uneven surface, hoping not to twist my ankle. "I want to win this race," I thought. I used every bit of energy left in my exhausted body, but the other runner suddenly appeared right behind me. I guess you could call it a photo finish because we crossed the finish line neck and neck, but he won by inches. Then it hit me. It didn't matter if I won or not because I tried my hardest.

The season ended. An awards ceremony was held in the school cafeteria. The coach called everybody's name, and then he finally called mine. "This is the moment," I thought. "This is the moment of truth." I received a varsity letter, reaching the goal I had set. I was also named the Outstanding Middle School Runner of the Year. Proud of myself, I thought, "I did my best this year, and next year I'll do even better."

The final sentence of the narrative helps reveal the significance of Alex's experience.

MINI-LESSON **How to Add Transitions**

In the final paragraph of his draft, Alex jumps from the end of the season to an awards ceremony. Then, he describes the coach calling "everybody's name." Alex does not use transitions to connect these ideas, and the sentences seem choppy. How can Alex describe what happened and make the passage of time clear? Transitions will help.

Alex revised the paragraph, adding transitions to show the passage of time and to connect the ideas. Transitions are written in blue.

Alex's Draft of Paragraph Four

The season ended. An awards ceremony was held in the school cafeteria. The coach called everybody's name, and then he finally called mine.

Alex's Revision of Paragraph Four

After many more races, I was excited when I went to the the season ended. An awards ceremony in the school later that month. Soon cafeteria the coach called everybody's name, and then he finally called mine. . . .

Your Turn

Add Transitions Read your draft and then ask yourself:

- Does each sentence flow logically from one idea to another?
- What transitional words, phrases, or sentences should I add to make my ideas flow more logically?

Differentiating Instruction

English-Language Learners

Use the mini-lesson as a vocabulary building opportunity. Work with students to generate a list of transitional words and phrases that indicate time order. Lists should include words and phrases such as *first, next, then, finally, as soon as, afterwards, second, ultimately,* and *in the end.* Challenge students to use transition words and phrases in every paragraph.

Writers Gaining Proficiency

If students have trouble organizing their events and details in the body of their narratives, offer them the following transition words: *First, Then, Next,* and *Finally.* Have students write each word at the beginning of a new paragraph in their drafts. Then they should fill in the details about events in the order they occurred.

Proofreading and Publishing

Proofreading

Re-read your personal narrative, and look for errors in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation. Make sure that you have used commas correctly in any series of verbs or verb phrases.

Proofreading Partners Trade papers with a partner to proofread each other's work and discuss any possible changes. Then, prepare your final copy to share with your audience.

Grammar Link Fixing Run-on Sentences

As you read over your narrative, be sure that you have a period at the end of every complete thought. In the second paragraph of his draft, Alex's writing was not clear because he had a run-on sentence. To fix the run-on sentence, Alex needed to fix the punctuation.

He fell back as I powered up the hill, I moved ahead, gaining distance.

Notice how Alex separated the run-on sentence into two complete sentences simply by changing the comma to a period.

Publishing

Share your personal narrative with your audience. Here are some ways to share your essay:

- Give a copy of your narrative to friends, family members, and classmates. If you wish, add photographs or illustrations to your narrative.
- Read your narrative aloud to a group.

Reflect on the Process

Thinking about how you wrote your personal narrative will help you in other writing that you'll do. In your **RWN,** make notes about what you learned and answer the following questions:

1. How did writing a personal narrative help you to better understand how you feel about your experience or what the importance of the experience might be?
2. What techniques did you use to convey the importance of that experience to your readers?

Proofreading Tip

Reading your narrative aloud may help you catch errors that you do not see when scanning the page. As you read aloud, pay attention to places where you stumble over phrases. There might be punctuation errors that you need to correct. Also pay attention to places where one thought runs into another without punctuation. These might be run-on sentences that need to end with a period.

Your Turn

Proofread and Publish Take time to proofread your work. Check to be sure you have fixed any run-on sentences. Also, correct any errors in punctuating a series of verbs. Some places where you could submit your work are:

- an online literary magazine
- your personal Web page
- a class anthology

Guided Practice

Grammar Link

- Explain that a run-on sentence is a sentence that contains two or more complete thoughts but lacks the punctuation that should separate them.
- Tell students to read their final drafts to check for run-on sentences. Students should look for sentences that seem unusually long or that are missing end punctuation.
- Remind students that the easiest way to correct a run-on sentence is to divide it into two or more separate sentences that end in periods.

Publishing

Brainstorm with students additional ways to publish their personal narratives.

Reflect on the Process

Have students reflect on the entire writing process as well as their final product. Challenge them to reflect metacognitively about how they can improve and apply what they have learned.

Your Turn

Proofread and Publish Before students hand in their final drafts they should make sure they have addressed all the evaluation questions in the Revision Guidelines on p. 130 and made corrections to their papers. Ask students to hand in their marked-up drafts with their final papers.

Guided Practice

Scoring Rubric

- Tell students that the best way to understand rubrics is to use them to score actual writing. Choose the rubric that best fits your state writing assessment and review it with students.
- Have students work with partners to use the rubric as they evaluate the final draft of the narratives they wrote in the Writing Workshop. Ask students to score each other's narratives and write a brief paragraph using the language of the rubric to explain the reasons for their score.

Holt Six Traits for Writing, rubrics, prompts, and sample papers

Assess

Writing and Speaking Workshops, Personal Narrative analytical scales and rubric

ThinkCentral Online Assessment, Writing Workshop Test

Teacher One Stop™, editable Writing Workshop Test

Reteach

ThinkCentral Online Remediation

Scoring Rubric

You can use one of the rubrics below to evaluate your personal narrative from the Writing Workshop or your response to the on-demand prompt on the next page.

6-Point Scale

Score 6 *Demonstrates advanced success*
- focuses consistently on a clear controlling idea
- shows effective organization throughout, with smooth transitions
- offers a thoughtful, creative approach to the narrative
- develops the narrative thoroughly, using incidents, details, and explanation
- exhibits mature control of written language

Score 5 *Demonstrates proficient success*
- focuses on a clear controlling idea
- shows effective organization, with transitions
- offers a thoughtful approach to the narrative
- develops the narrative competently, using incidents, details, and explanation
- exhibits sufficient control of written language

Score 4 *Demonstrates competent success*
- focuses on a clear controlling idea, with minor distractions
- shows effective organization, with minor lapses
- offers a mostly thoughtful approach to the narrative
- develops the narrative adequately, using some incidents, details, and explanation
- exhibits general control of written language

Score 3 *Demonstrates limited success*
- includes some loosely related ideas that distract from the controlling idea
- shows some organization, with noticeable gaps in the logical flow of ideas
- offers a routine, predictable approach to the narrative
- develops the narrative with uneven use of incidents, details, and explanation
- exhibits limited control of written language

Score 2 *Demonstrates basic success*
- includes loosely related ideas that seriously distract from the writer's controlling idea
- shows minimal organization, with major gaps in the logical flow of ideas
- offers a narrative that merely skims the surface
- develops the narrative with inadequate use of incidents, details, and explanation
- exhibits significant problems with control of written language

Score 1 *Demonstrates emerging effort*
- shows little awareness of the topic and purpose for writing
- lacks organization
- offers an unclear and confusing narrative
- develops the narrative in only a minimal way, if at all
- exhibits major problems with control of written language

4-Point Scale

Score 4 *Demonstrates advanced success*
- focuses consistently on a clear controlling idea
- shows effective organization throughout, with smooth transitions
- offers a thoughtful, creative approach to the narrative
- develops the narrative thoroughly, using incidents, details, and explanation
- exhibits mature control of written language

Score 3 *Demonstrates competent success*
- focuses on a clear controlling idea, with minor distractions
- shows effective organization, with minor lapses
- offers a mostly thoughtful approach to the narrative
- develops the narrative adequately, using some incidents, details, and explanation
- exhibits general control of written language

Score 2 *Demonstrates limited success*
- includes some loosely related ideas that distract from the controlling idea
- shows some organization, with noticeable gaps in the logical flow of ideas
- offers a routine, predictable approach to the narrative
- develops the narrative with uneven use of incidents, details, and explanation
- exhibits limited control of written language

Score 1 *Demonstrates emerging effort*
- shows little awareness of the topic and purpose for writing
- lacks organization
- offers an unclear and confusing narrative
- develops the narrative in only a minimal way, if at all
- exhibits major problems with control of written language

Personal Narrative Writing Prompts

Students can use the writing prompt on p. 135 in the Student Edition or one of the following prompts.

- Who is your best friend? Write a personal narrative about the first time you and your friend met or another moment in your friendship. Include vivid details and explain why the moment was important.
- Do you have a pet that you love? Write a personal narrative in which you recall how you came to adopt your pet. Be sure to describe your pet vividly and explain his/her importance.
- What is your favorite holiday? Recall a memorable holiday and use vivid language to describe what made it so special.

SKILLS FOCUS pp. 134–135

Writing Skills
- Write narratives.
- Use transition words to connect ideas.
- Revise writing to improve organization and refine word choice.