

**Women Call Out
The Personal Narrative
A TAKS Type Essay**

Subject: English Language Arts

Grade Level: 9-12

Rational or Purpose: After studying several personal narratives written by women in the 1920's, students will create and write one of their own that demonstrates the *6 + 1 Writing Traits*: organization, ideas, fluency, word choice, and conventions. Student essays should especially create a strong emotional voice as seen in HRC's *Teaching the Twenties Collection*, "The Rise of Women, Mothers in Bondage."

Materials: Computer with internet access
http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/exhibitions/online/teachingthetwenties/theme_viewer.php?theme=big§ion=women.
Paper
Pen or pencil
Dictionary

Lesson Duration: 4 class blocks

Objectives: English III

- 1A-C The student writes in a variety of forms.
- 2A-E The student uses recursive writing processes.
- 3A-E The student uses conventions appropriately.
- 4A-G The student uses writing as a tool for learning.
- 5A-B The student evaluates his own writing and the writing of others.

Activity:

Step 1: Students will use computers to access HRC's "American Twenties" collection. They will pay special attention to *Motherhood in Bondage* excerpts. After reading these excerpts aloud, the class will discuss their content and connect to the historical time period, and then to today. What makes these narratives so moving? In what ways do they reflect a different time period?

Step 2: Students will brainstorm and plot their own personal narrative.
Prompt:

Write an essay about a how a person may feel

**controlled by his or her life, rather than being
in control of his or her life.**

Students will plot their essays

- Beginning (4 bullets)
- Middle (10 bullets)
- End (4 bullets)

Students may use personal experiences, or the experiences of a literary character; but they must use specific experiences to develop their essay.

Step 3: Students will write the rough draft of their essay, using their plot chart. Essay should be approximately two pages in length.

Step 4: Students will work in small groups of 3-4 people. They will exchange essays and read. They will then talk about each essay. What are the better points? What can be done to improve the narrative? You may have them look at passive voice, or use of dialogue. Is their development of voice clear? Each group will then select one essay that is outstanding in some way and share it with the class as a whole. The class will then discuss what makes these narratives good.\

Step 5: Students will now edit and revise their own narratives, rewrite and turn in a final copy of their own narratives.

Modifications: For special needs students assist in their brainstorming and plotting. Allow extra time to complete narrative if necessary.

For gifted students: Have their narrative include both personal experience as well as a literary character. Be sure they make connections between all of their ideas.

Student Product: A Personal Narrative

Closure: Have a reading circle. All students will read their essays aloud. Focus on voice. Do these papers have voice?

Assessment or evaluation: Assess the essay on the 6+1 Traits.

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