English 1301 – Literacy Narrative

First off, let’s go with the obvious question: What is a Literacy Narrative?

- A literacy narrative is a specific type of personal narrative. It is a sharing of your first hand experiences with reading and/or writing in any context. That about this: What is the story behind the story? In this case, what is the writer’s personal experience with reading and writing? A memoir or journal may document a person’s life story, but the literacy narrative focuses on the important aspects of reading and/or writing. It is, in essence, a specific type of autobiography—one that deals with your experiences with reading and writing.

- Literacy narratives can be about your experiences at any point in your life (although the extreme impact that Go Dogs Go or The Cat in the Hat had on you does not normally make for the most captivating read—let’s try to dig a little deeper)

- Literacy narratives can be about reading stories, books, music, or video game cheats—anything at all that you read or any story about teaching reading. They can also be about composing letters, Facebook pages, song lyrics, zines, blogs, maps, essays in school—anything at all that you compose, or any story about teaching writing.

- There is no one size fits all approach to a literacy narrative. They can be sad or happy, poignant or funny, informative or incidental. Often, they focus on significant memories about events, people, situations, places—times when you tried and succeeded or tried and failed; someone who gave you a chance or took one away; situations when someone taught you how to do something or when you taught someone else; churches and schools, contests and performances, plays and public presentations. The options are endless.

Here are a few ideas that may help you get started on finding a topic that works for you:

• A history or a email message that made you blush? • Did you ever win (or lose) a crucial public debate? Did you ever forget your lines in a play? Learn American Sign Language? Have you ever bonded with a character from a story or novel?

• Did you learn to read by studying the back of a cereal box? Do you remember the first time you thought of yourself as a writer? When you got (or lost) your first library card? The bedtime stories your parents used to read to you? Your favorite book?

• Have you ever felt illiterate? Can you tell us a story about a time you were punished for reading (or not reading)? A time when you were rewarded for writing insightfully?

• Can you tell us a story about the first time you used a computer? The first e-mail message you composed? Your first Facebook page? The first video you made and uploaded to YouTube?

• Do you have memories about playing “teacher” with your friends? Creating a family newspaper or a ‘zine? Reciting scripture to the congregation of your church? Was you mom or dad or one of your grandparents a writer? A reader? Can you tell us a story about how they helped you write or read?

Assignment details:

1. Please refer to the following sources and internet sites for MLA format for your essays: Review – A Writer’s Reference, Diana Hacker. Specific guidelines for the literacy narrative are in Chapter 6 of the Norton Field Guide (21-37).

2. All papers must be typed (12 pt., Times New Roman font, double spaced) as a docx or rich text document. Word count requirement is 700-1000 words. This does not include the heading, title, works cited, etc. Word count should be measured from the first word of the introduction to the last word of the conclusion.

3. The format will be MLA style (1” margin right/left and top bottom margins). Pagination will begin on the second page. This is easily accomplished by:
   
   Step 1: Selecting Insert from your top menu buttons and selecting Page # (third option)

   Step 2: From the selected page numberings, choose the third option with just the page number
Step 3: After doing this in the same menu box where you selected Page #s you will now see an option to select: Different First Page - select this box. This will leave the first page header blank.

Step 4: Now you can to page 2 and place your header information, which is you last name. Make sure this is in front of the page number (Ex: Hall 2 in the upper right hand corner)

4. Heading (goes on first line of document/not in header & footer and should be double-spaced)

   Your Name

   Mr. Hall

   English IV DC Period____

   Current date (# Month Year)

5. Title of Assignment (Centered)