Prewrite a Personal Narrative

1. Focus (15 MINUTES)

Display page 5 of *Personal Narratives* using the big book or interactive whiteboard resources. Reread the Sample Problems web. **Say:** Today I’m going to prewrite, or plan, my first personal narrative. I will choose one of the sample problems to write about. Almost all these problems have really happened in my life. I’m going to write about getting sick.

Display the Personal Narratives graphic organizer (BLM 1) on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources. **Say:** A personal narrative has a beginning, middle, and an end. I will draw about a time when I was sick. I’ll draw what happened at the beginning of my personal narrative in the “Beginning” box, what happened in the middle in the “Middle” box, and what happened at the end in the “End” box.

Tell about a time you were sick. Include characters, a setting, a problem, and a resolution. As you tell each part, draw a sketch in the appropriate box. **Say:** I remember one time when I felt sick. Mom came to wake me up to get ready for school. I’ll draw this in the “Beginning” box. I was sad because that meant I couldn’t go on a field trip with my class. I’ll draw myself looking sad and crying in the “Middle” box. I missed the field trip, but my teacher gave me a video of it, and my mom and I watched it. I’ll draw my mom and me on the couch watching the video in the “End” box. I’m looking happy.

Model checking that you have all the features of a personal narrative. Point to each box as you say: I show my characters in the “Beginning” box. The setting is their home. I show this in all three boxes. The problem is that the child is sick. I show this in the “Middle” box. And I show how the problem is resolved in the “End” box.

Objectives

Concepts About Print
• Use appropriate uppercase letters and end punctuation.

Oral Language and Grammar
• Share a personal experience about being sick.
• Use complete sentences.
• Use common nouns, adjectives, and personal pronouns.

Purposeful Phonics Connections
• Apply phonics knowledge to encode unknown words.
• Write high-frequency words.

Reflecting Reading in Writing
• Analyze features of a personal narrative.
• Visualize and ask questions.

Writing
• Draw and write a journal entry.

Materials
• Mentor big book: *Personal Narratives*
• Graphic organizer prepared prior to lesson (BLM 1; see Focus)
• Chart paper and markers
• Interactive whiteboard resources
Ask students to turn to their partners. Say: Tell your partner about a time you got sick. If you can’t remember a time like that, think of another event you could write about.

Tell the beginning, middle, and end of your story. Then see if your partner can name the characters, setting, problem, and resolution. Move among the pairs of students to monitor and support their efforts.

Say: Tomorrow you can draw your story. Today is the last day we’ll write in our journals.

Based on your evaluation of the journal writing assessment, emphasize a skill or strategy students still need to practice. Say: Today I want you to pay special attention to ______. Provide a quick review using the Journals big book or a previously modeled journal page. Say: Remember to use our Journals anchor chart, too. I will be here to help you if you need me!

**2. Rehearse** (5 MINUTES)

Invite students to close their eyes and visualize an experience to draw and write about in a journal. Say: Tell your partner what you plan to draw and write about. Tell what happened, who was there, and how everyone felt. Then act out your idea to make sure you have a complete thought.

**3. Independent Writing and Conferring** (20 MINUTES)

Distribute students’ writing journals. Invite each student to draw a picture of what he or she described to a partner and to write as many sentences as possible. Say: Before you write, tell your partner what you need to remember to do today. Support students as they strive to implement the selected skill or strategy. Allow students to get ideas and help from one another as well, and use the Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to help you provide differentiated support to individual students based on your observations.

Ask students to stop five minutes before writing time is over. Say: Check your writing to make sure you included ______ (use today’s skill emphasis). Then assist students who need help checking, revising, or editing their writing.

**4. Share** (5 MINUTES)

Invite two or three students to share their drawings and written messages. Point out and celebrate examples of developing skills.

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**Sample Responsive Conferring Prompts to Support and Scaffold Writers**

**Goal Oriented**
- I remember when ______.
- I will visualize how I felt and then write about it.
- I need to use uppercase letters at the beginnings of my sentences.

**Directive and Corrective Feedback**
- Tell me about your memory. What happened? How did you feel?
- A complete sentence needs to tell about an action or a feeling. What action word could you write here?
- Do you need an uppercase or lowercase letter here (pointing)?

**Self-Monitoring and Reflection**
- How did visualizing help you decide what to draw and write about? Tell what happened, who was there, and how everyone felt. Then act out your idea to make sure you have a complete thought.
- Read your sentence. What describing word could you add to help your readers visualize your experience?
- What pronoun could you use here (pointing)?

**Validating and Confirming**
- You wrote about what happened and how you felt. That’s a strong journal entry.
- You made your writing sound like talking! Good job!
- I noticed that you asked questions to help you choose the best words to use. Strong writers do that!

**Teacher Tip**
Continue collecting personal narratives from a variety of sources, such as primary grade magazines and older students at your school, and display them on a bulletin board. Include a photograph or description of the writer with each personal narrative if possible.