1. Focus

**Introduce the Mentor Personal Narrative**

*Say:* A great way to build up your personal narrative writing skills is to read or listen to personal narratives. That way you can see the features that personal narrative writers include in their writing. Today I’m going to read aloud a personal narrative written by a girl named Cameron Swain, who lives in New York City. As we read about Cameron’s misadventure, we’re going to stop and notice some key features of her personal narrative. When you write your own personal narratives, you will also be including these features.

Read aloud the title of the selection on page 6 of the mentor text. You may also wish to display the text using the interactive whiteboard resources.

*Say:* The title of Cameron’s personal narrative is “The Day I Split My Chin.” There’s a lot of information in that title. What do you think Cameron’s misadventure is? Allow students to share their predictions.

If your class includes English learners or other students who would benefit from vocabulary and oral language development to comprehend the narrative, use “Make the Mentor Text Comprehensible for ELs.”

**Read Aloud the Mentor Personal Narrative**

Read aloud the text, stopping at some or all of the places indicated (or at other points you choose) to highlight two key features of a personal narrative:

1. Personal narratives focus on one particular incident in the author’s life.
2. The author includes specific details about the time, place, and people involved.

**Details about Time, Place, and People**

*After reading page 6.* *Say:* We’ve only read one page, and already I know where the narrative begins, what the weather is like, what season and time of day it is, and who the author is with. The details that the author includes, like when she mentions the cloudless sky and the steep hill, help me see the setting in my mind’s eye.

**Particular Incident in the Author’s Life**

*Page 7, after first paragraph.* *Say:* As soon as I read the words, “Now here is the problem,” I know the author is about to tell me about the particular incident her personal narrative focuses on. It sounds really frightening! No wonder she writes about her bike accident. I’m curious to find out what happens afterwards, so let’s keep reading.
Details about Time and People
Page 8, after third paragraph. Say: I like how the author tells me the way time passes for her when she writes, “We waited for a long time. At least it seemed like a long time.” This detail helps me understand what it must have felt like to wait for something so serious. I also like how the author mentions that her brother is being nice. I know that brothers and sisters aren’t always nice to each other. In her time of need, the author’s brother is there for her.

Details about Place and People
Page 9, after first paragraph. Say: This must be a very important part of the author’s experience, because she describes the doctor and the chair in detail. When she describes the chair as “like a chair in a dentist’s office,” I can really see that chair. The fact that the author illustrates the doctor examining her in the chair also tells me that this is a memorable moment in her misadventure.

2. Rehearse

Respond Orally to the Mentor Personal Narrative

After reading, invite students to share their personal reactions to the text by asking questions such as:

- Has anything like that ever happened to you? What?
- Think of how the author felt when she was waiting to see the plastic surgeon. Have you ever felt that way?

If necessary, model the following sentence frames to support ELs and struggling students:

- Something like this happened to me when ______.
- I once felt ______ when ______.

Make the Mentor Text Comprehensible for ELs

Beginning

Use a piece of paper to demonstrate “splitting.” Cut a slit in the paper. Point to the slit. Say: This paper is split. (Now point to the photograph of the author on page 4.) This girl split her chin. Point to your chin.

Beginning and Intermediate

Say: This personal narrative is about a bike accident. This personal narrative is about an accident that hurts the author’s chin.

Intermediate and Advanced

Display an image of a scar that was sewn up with stitches, either by drawing it on chart paper or by using the interactive whiteboard resources. Ask: Who has had stitches? What do you know about getting stitches? When does someone need stitches? Who gives stitches? Encourage a background-building discussion about accidents and getting stitches.

All Levels

If you have students whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: bike/la bici; doctor/el doctor/la doctora.

Use the interactive whiteboard resources to find images to front-load key vocabulary and concepts for the mentor text read-aloud.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: Remember that when you write your personal narrative, you are sharing a particular incident with your readers—your classmates. Including details about the time, place, and people in your narrative will help your readers understand it better.

During independent writing time, encourage students to choose a personal memorable misadventure. Ask them to write or draw details about when and where it happened.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to share their memories of a memorable misadventure and the details about it that they drew or wrote.