

The Narrative Essay

The main purpose of a narrative essay is to tell the reader about a key event, a crucial interaction, or experience that happened to the author over a limited time period. Therefore, writing a narrative is like writing a story. Most importantly, the narrative **must** have a purpose. (Think of this as your thesis!) Other important traits of a narrative include:

- It must be written from a clear point of view.
- Clear and concise language is used.
- The use of the first-person pronoun 'I' is welcomed. However, do not abuse this exception!
- Body paragraphs must be in a logical order. Typically, this means the narrative will be in chronological order (Purdue Writing Lab, n.d.).

The most common method for writing a narrative essay is the five-paragraph approach, which includes all four components of an essay. These consist of:

- **The introduction:** Provide a hook sentence that will make the reader want to read the rest of your essay. The introduction is also where the writer will provide a setting and notify the reader of the thesis.
- **Three Body paragraphs:** Each body paragraph will contain a topic sentence, which is the main idea of the body paragraph. The writer will develop and connect details to the topic. Additionally, the writer will provide a transition from one paragraph to the next.
- **A Conclusion:** The writer will connect the paragraph details to the overall theme. The writer should try to end the narrative in an impactful way so that the reader has no doubt in their mind as to the purpose of the narrative.
- **Citations:** Some narrative essays will require the students to use citations. These are used to prove that your assignment is academically honest. At Bow Valley College, most writing assignments will require the student to use the APA citation style. See the [Library website](#) on how to properly cite references.

Note: While this is an excellent source of reference, students are encouraged to check their syllabus and/or rubric to ensure they include all the requirements of an assignment.

Reference

Purdue Online Writing Lab. (n.d.). *Narrative essays*.

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/essay_writing/narrative_essays.html