

Mapping Our Memories

(Created by Mr. Roy)

Our first writing piece is asking you to focus specifically on one story from your childhood. Each step in this writing piece asks you to examine various memories from your past that have had unique impacts on you and choose one of those memories to write about.

Step 1 (Pre-Writing):

Take a piece of blank paper and on it draw a map of where you lived between the ages of three and twelve. If you lived in more than one place, choose only one to draw. It can be something as specific as a house, a playground near your house, a baseball field, or it can be something as wide open as an entire neighborhood.

Step 2 (Pre-Writing):

After you have completed your map, make special note of any landmarks that you remember. Examples of landmarks can be things like a bedroom, a kitchen table, the front steps, a slide or swing set, the treehouse you built, the prickly bushes where you lost your ball, or the rock that was “goals” (or “ghouls”). Mark down any and all of these specific landmarks that you remember being important or having their own mini-story.

Step 3 (Pre-Writing):

Once you have completed your map you will pair up with someone close by and explain all the details of your map. You should be able to describe small events that took place at each landmark as well. You should also describe any other people that you remember being involved and how they impacted your stories. Once you have completed your explanations, your partner will then explain his or her map to you.

Step 4 (First Draft):

Use your map and conversation to write a short story about one of your memories. To really get your story told effectively, you will need to describe the location and events that occur using what’s called “sensory language” to elicit emotional responses.

Remember the senses and emotional response chart we created and used with the Joan Didion story? That is a great example of using sensory language to link to emotional responses that draws your reader in. Your goal should be that your reader experience the story with you (show, not tell). Your first draft should be ready for a writing workshop on ***Monday, September 19.***

Step 5 (Workshop/Revise):

You will get together in your writing groups and workshop each other’s stories. One member of the group will start by reading her/his story to the rest of the group. Once she/he has read the story completely, the other members of the group will, one at a time, have the chance to give feedback while the author takes notes.

Each member of the group must participate in this process AND must tell the author what she/he likes and what she/he does not about the story.

After each member of the group has had a chance to give feedback, the author of the story will be given the opportunity to react to individual feedback.

Step 6 (Revisions/Graded Draft):

Using the notes you've taken during our workshop day(s) and any other feedback you've received from others or yourself you will be asked to revise your work and submit a Graded Draft.

Your Graded Draft will be a minimum of 3 pages and is due **NO LATER THAN** the start of class ***Friday, September 23***, along with your First Draft, any revisions you've made (including highlighting), and any notes you took during writing workshop. Your Graded Draft must be in standard MLA format (heading, double spaced, page numbers, etc).