

Memoir Writing

@ San Mateo Senior Center

Session One

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Connect & Learn

Memoir Writing

Do you want to pass down a written legacy to the next generation? Write your first-person life narrative. You will learn proper technique, practice your craft, receive encouragement, partner up, and polish your text. Join us!

Instructor: Senior Center Volunteer

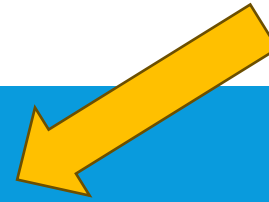
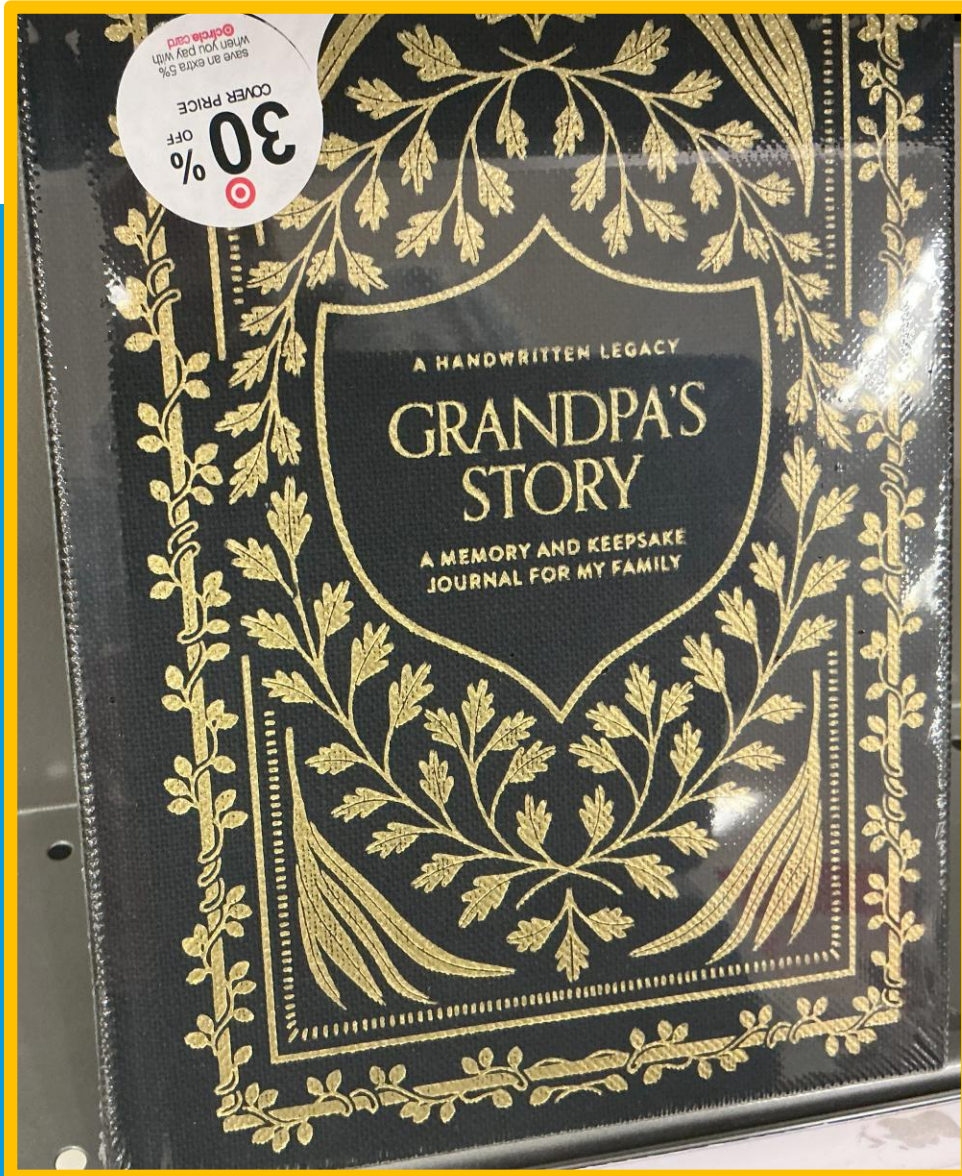
Senior Center

542030-A1	Tue	10:00-11:00am	Free	9/16-11/25
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Syllabus, PowerPoint, and handouts are available at:
chrisalanforeman.com/memoir



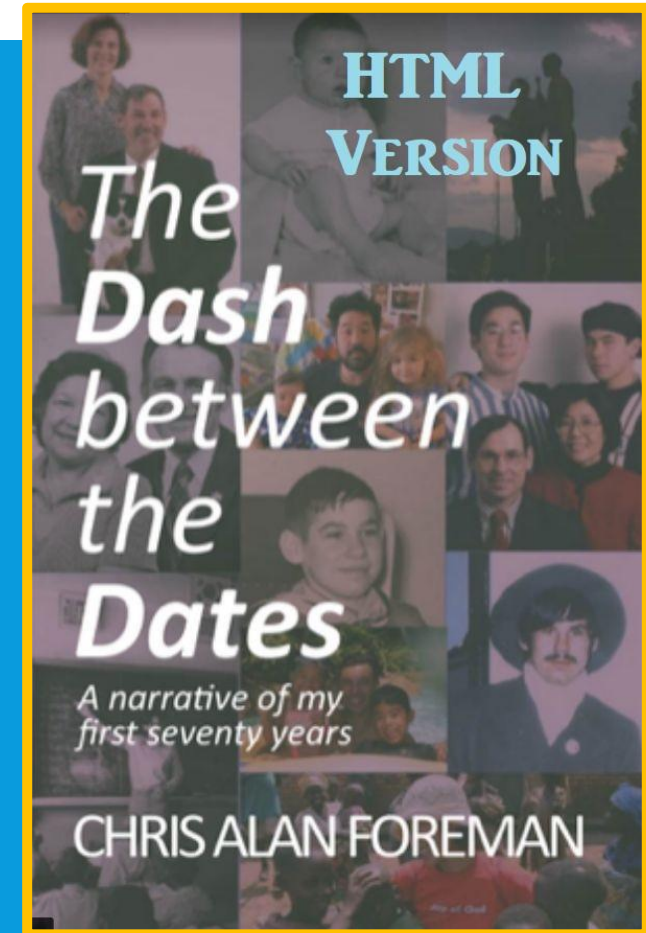
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Sent to 4 grandchildren in 2021



Completed
in 2020



WHAT IS MEMOIR?

- Memoir is a first-person life narrative.
- Memoir tells your story and muses upon it, trying to unravel what it means in light of current knowledge.
- Memoir is truth re-imagined. You become the editor of your own life.

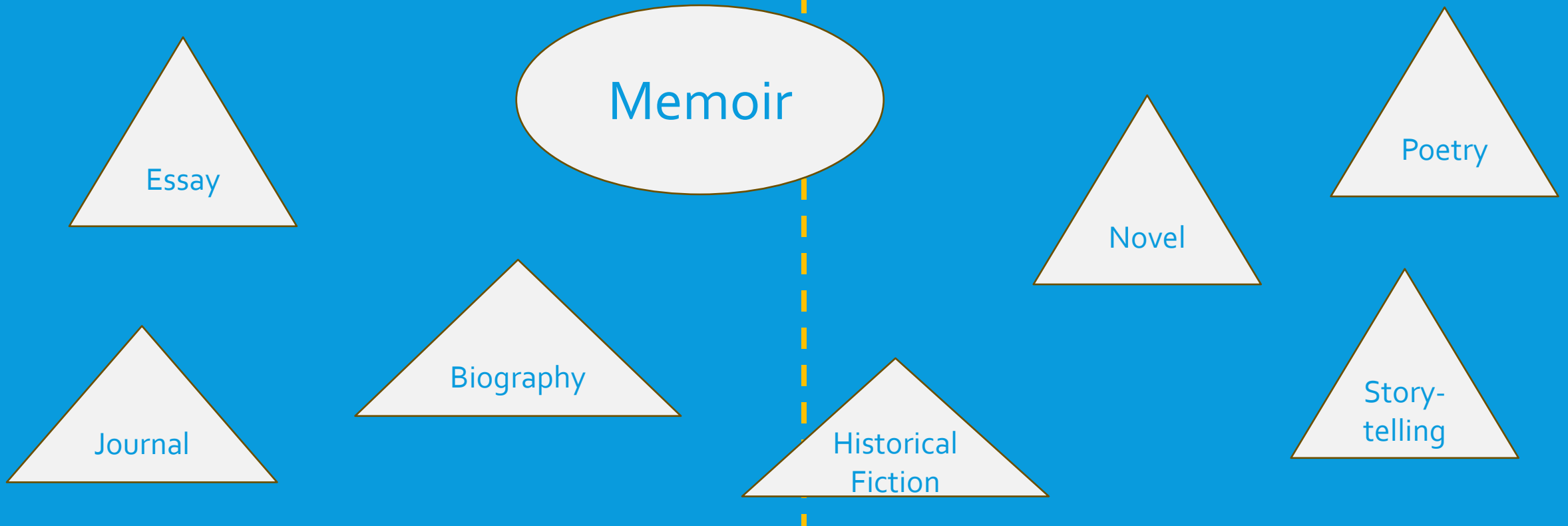
MORE ABOUT MEMOIR

- Moments in your story should resonate with readers, especially within your community.
- Your memoir should be deeply personal yet universal.
- Your memoir is part art and part craft: The art is the concept and the craft is the in bringing it to completion.

WHERE IS MEMOIR?

Non- Fiction

Fiction



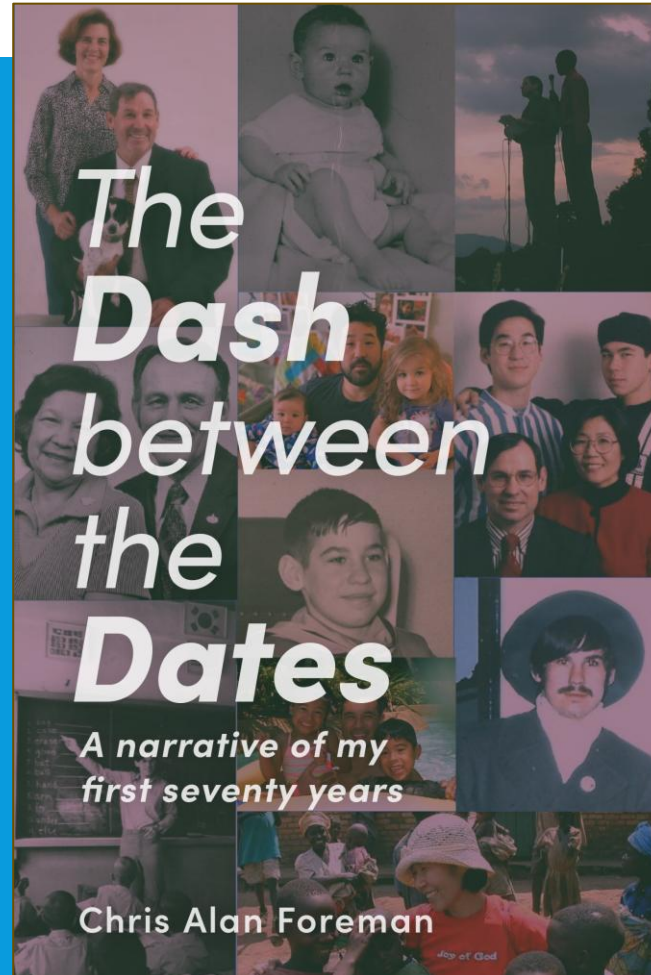
NARRATIVE ARC

- Construct an arc for the narrative, both for the entire text and for each chapter; a take-off, a flight of words, and a graceful landing.
- To keep the reader's attention, include conflict and resolution, tension and release. There may be surprises and sometimes non-resolution.
- In memoir, the reader moves through your story as you perceived it; years compressed into a sentence and an hour expressed in a chapter.

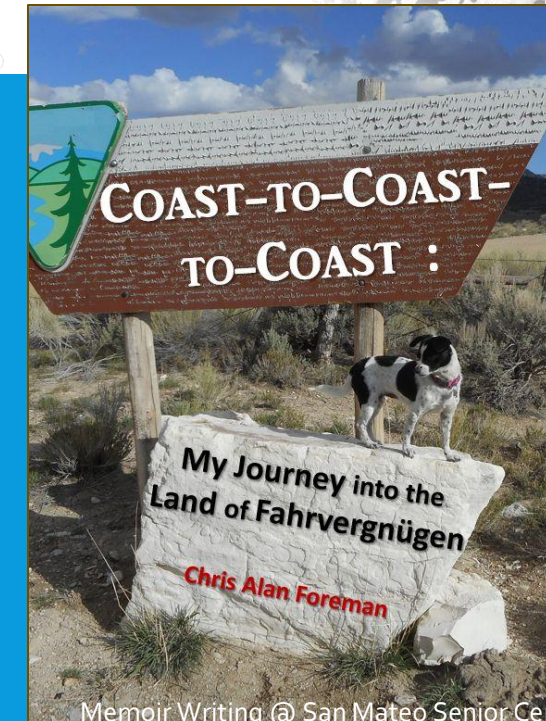
Forgive Like a Rwandan

A MEMOIR OF LOVE, LOSS, AND LETTING GO

Chris Alan Foreman



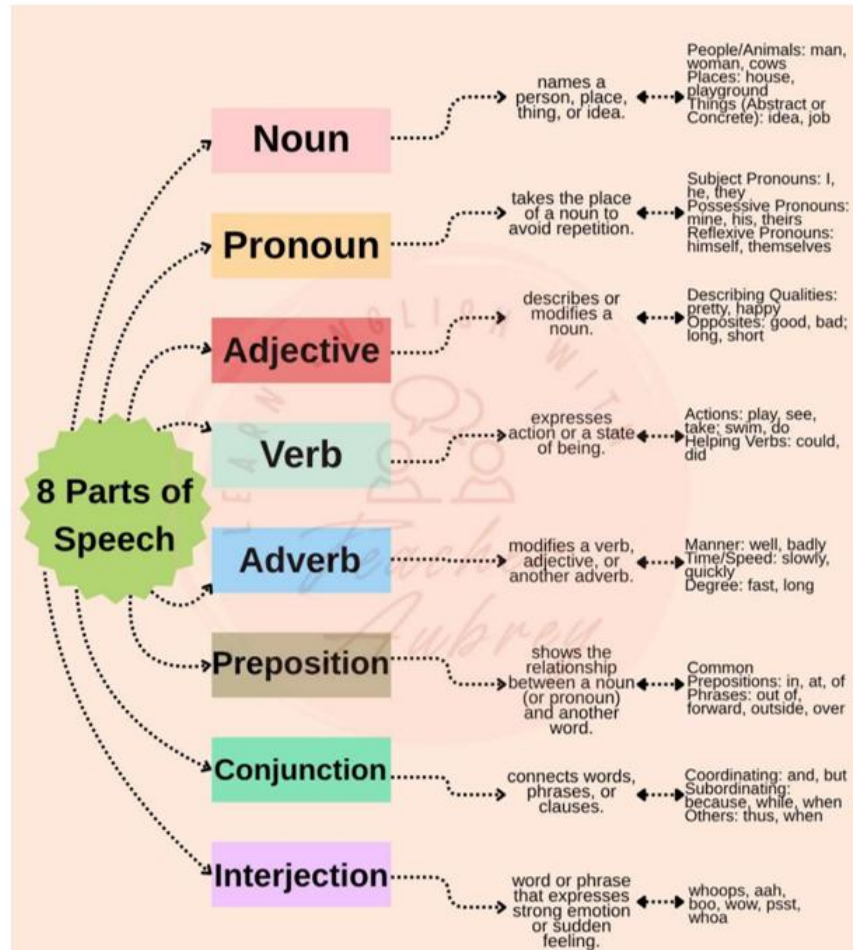
"The great thing
about getting older
is that you don't
lose all the other
ages you've been"
Madeline L'Engle



VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

English Vocabulary: **Difficult** vs **Easy**:

1. **Ascetic** – self-disciplined
2. **Bombastic** – boastful
3. **Capitulate** – surrender
4. **Disparate** – very different
5. **Exculpate** – free from blame
6. **Fortuitous** – accidental (lucky)
7. **Gratuitous** – unnecessary
8. **Harrowing** – very distressing
9. **Impetuous** – hasty
10. **Jingoistic** – overly patriotic
11. **Lurid** – shocking
12. **Mendacious** – dishonest
13. **Nebulous** – vague
14. **Obsequious** – overly submissive
15. **Paragon** – perfect example



Reading 1

Chapter 2 – Evil Sufficient for One Day (excerpt) – July 31, 2010

I stared blankly out my side window as eucalyptus trees and banana groves zipped by. When I rolled my head to look out the front windshield, I noticed our car drifting across the center median into the left lane. Far ahead I saw an on-rushing minibus. I heard its honking horn. Time slowed as if in a dream.

I screamed, “Franc!” and heard his high-pitched shriek.

Franc yanked the steering wheel hard to the right to avoid the oncoming vehicle. Then he swerved left to recover. I felt the right tires leave the roadway. The car careened to the right, tires screeching. Finally, with a desperate left, the front left axle dug into the asphalt road.

I felt the jarring and inertial force as the car tumbled forward. After what seemed like a rough ride on a roller coaster, the car rested on its rooftop. I was suspended upside down in my seatbelt. My shoes had flung off and my glasses had disappeared, but I felt no injury. In fact, I felt exhilaration. Hadn’t I just survived an awful crash?

I shouted, “Yobo, Yobo!”—the Korean term for “sweetheart.” There was no reply.

I saw Franc outside the car. He stood with a stoop, two hands holding his bleeding scalp. I felt a rush of hope. Might I also discover Kim standing outside?

Instead, I saw several Rwandans peering into the inverted vehicle through broken glass. I tried to unbuckle my harness, but tension held it fixed. “Scissors,” I yelled out, but there was no response. I mimicked cutting blades with my fingers, and within a few seconds an old man cut my harness with a kitchen knife. Two others pulled me through the shattered window opening. A boy retrieved my shoes and I walked a few steps.

I peered into the backseat, but Kim wasn’t there. A local man grabbed my elbow and pointed me back several steps to the roadside. There, half on the roadway and half on the side gravel, lay Kim’s crumpled body. Her knees were tucked under her stomach in a fetal position.

Her torso was angled toward the centerline and her head was turned to my approach. I saw no obvious signs of trauma: no puddles of blood, no broken neck, no projecting bones. I hoped for the best.

On hands and knees, I placed my face close to hers and studied her for a moment. Kim appeared to grimace as if in profound thought. Her breathing was labored and red-speckled spittle colored the corners of her mouth. With tenderness I stroked the back of her head. I felt warm, sticky blood on my hand. My composure collapsed.

“O God, O God, O God,” I wailed, convulsing in grief. “My love, my life, please don’t leave me.”

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Session Two

WHO IS YOUR AUDIENCE?

- Especially if you intend to market your book, identify your key audience.
- Keep this audience picture in mind as you write.
- Your book dedication may provide a hint at your intended audience.
- Compose a working title, a brief back cover bio, and a brief encapsulation of the narrative (elevator speech).

USING YOUR SENSES

SHOW DON'T TELL (SDT)

- Concrete nouns can be experienced by one of the senses. They tend to go with showing.
- Abstract nouns can be experiences in the mind. They tend to go with telling.
- Descriptions especially should show not tell.
- Try to include all five senses.

NAMING NAMES

- The names of people, places, and products make your writing interesting and believable. They evoke the time and place.
- When writing about living people, get their permission (or at least warn them).

THE TRUTH: WHAT, WHY, AND HOW?

- Understand the difference between exact truth (fact) and emotional truth. Memoir is intensely subjective.
- You may adjust details in the interest of clarity, perhaps reorder events or combine characters. Conversations must be re-imagined.
- Happy endings don't always happen. Don't favor completion over complexity.



Warts and all

Oliver Cromwell

Your memoir – your self portrait - is an act of vanity for posterity.
Do your best to also make it an act of honesty with a measure of modesty.

VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

ENGLISH WORDS

ADVANCED

BASIC

English Par Excellence

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Vituperative | – Abusive |
| 2. Dilatory | – Slow |
| 3. Acerbic | – Sharp-tongued |
| 4. Nocturnal | – Active at night |
| 5. Irascible | – Short-tempered |
| 6. Soporific | – Sleep-inducing |
| 7. Quagmire | – Mess |
| 8. Clairvoyant | – Psychic |
| 9. Cacophony | – Harsh noise |
| 10. Sycophant | – Flatterer |
| 11. Nefarious | – Evil |
| 12. Refulgent | – Shining |
| 13. Anathema | – Hated thing |
| 14. Fastidious | – Fussy |
| 15. Extemporaneous | – Unprepared |
| 16. Obfuscate | – Confuse |
| 17. Inchoate | – Undeveloped |
| 18. Ennui | – Boredom |

Grammar "Rules"

DON'T split the infinitive

DON'T use double negatives

"NONE" is always singular

DON'T end a sentence
with a preposition

DON'T use "less" when you
mean "fewer"

"HOPEFULLY" has only one
meaning

Reading 2

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

MAYA ANGELOU

"What you looking at me for?
I didn't come to stay . . ."

I hadn't so much forgot as I couldn't bring myself to remember. Other things were more important.

"What you looking at me for?
I didn't come to stay . . ."

Whether I could remember the rest of the poem or not was immaterial. The truth of the statement was like a wadded up handkerchief, sopping wet in my fists, and the sooner they accepted it the quicker I could let my hands open and the air would cool my palms.

"What you looking at me for . . . ?"

The children's section of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church was wiggling and giggling over my well-known forgetfulness.

The dress I wore was lavender taffeta, and each time I breathed it rustled, and now that I was sucking in air to breathe out shame it sounded like crepe paper on the back of hearses.

As I'd watched Momma put ruffles on the hem and cute little tucks around the waist, I knew that once I put it on I'd

look like a movie star. (It was silk and that made up for the awful color.) I was going to look like one of the sweet little white girls who were everybody's dream of what was right with the world. Hanging softly over the black Singer sewing machine, it looked like magic, and when people saw me wearing it they were going to run up to me and say, "Marguerite [sometimes it was 'dear Marguerite'], forgive us, please, we didn't know who you were," and I would answer generously, "No, you couldn't have known. Of course I forgive you."

Just thinking about it made me go around with angel's dust sprinkled over my face for days. But Easter's early morning sun had shown the dress to be a plain ugly cut-down from a white woman's once-was-purple throwaway. It was old-lady-long too, but it didn't hide my skinny legs, which had been greased with Blue Seal Vaseline and powdered with the Arkansas red clay. The age-faded color made my skin look dirty like mud, and everyone in church was looking at my skinny legs.

Wouldn't they be surprised when one day I woke out of my black ugly dream, and my real hair, which was long and blond, would take the place of the kinky mass that Momma wouldn't let me straighten? My light-blue eyes were going to hypnotize them, after all the things they said about "my daddy must of been a Chinaman" (I thought they meant made out of china, like a cup) because my eyes were so small and squinty. Then they would understand why I had never picked up a Southern accent, or spoke the common slang, and why I had to be forced to eat pigs' tails and snouts. Because I was really white and because a cruel fairy stepmother, who was understandably jealous of my beauty, had turned me into a too-big Negro girl, with nappy black hair, broad feet and a space between her teeth that would hold a number-two pencil.

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Session Three

CHOOSE YOUR WORDS

- Verbs carry meaning. Nouns should be concrete. Use modifiers sparingly (adjectives and adverbs).
- Metaphors, similes, and symbols enrich meaning, making us see something in new a way.
- Avoid clichés. Avoid word repetition.
- Try always to use **active voice** not **passive voice**.

REMEMBER POINT OF VIEW (POV)

- In memoir, POV is naturally first person
- The narrator is you, the author and protagonist.
- Be careful not to violate POV. Don't slip into omniscience.

THE THREE BASIC ELEMENTS OF ANY STORY

- **Setting** ~ Evoke a vivid sense of place and time.
- **People** ~ Make your characters round not flat
- **Plot** ~ This is story's organization, structure, and arc.

VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

English Vocabulary: *Difficult vs. Easy:*

1. **Alacrity** – eagerness
2. **Bloviate** – speak pompously
3. **Circumvent** – avoid
4. **Demagogue** – manipulative leader
5. **Ennoble** – dignify
6. **Fallacious** – wrong or misleading
7. **Grandstanding** – showing off
8. **Heinous** – very evil
9. **Ineluctable** – unavoidable
10. **Jargon** – specialized language
11. **Lampoon** – mock
12. **Miscreant** – wrongdoer
13. **Nonentity** – unimportant person
14. **Pariah** – outcast

The Four Principal Parts

	1st PP	2nd PP	3rd PP	4th PP
	talk	talking	talked	talked
regular verbs	abandon	abandoning	abandoned	abandoned
("weak" verbs)	repair	repairing	repaired	repaired
	grip	gripping	gripped	gripped
	eat	eating	ate	eaten
irregular verbs	sing	singing	sang	sung
("strong" verbs)	be	being	was	been
	bring	bringing	brought	brought

Reading 3

Norman Maclean

A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT



IN OUR FAMILY, there was no clear line between religion and fly fishing. We lived at the junction of great trout rivers in western Montana, and our father was a Presbyterian minister and a fly fisherman who tied his own flies and taught others. He told us about Christ's disciples being fishermen, and we were left to assume, as my brother and I did, that all first-class fishermen on the Sea of Galilee were fly fishermen and that John, the favorite, was a dry-fly fisherman.

It is true that one day a week was given over wholly to religion. On Sunday mornings my brother, Paul, and I went to Sunday school and then to "morning services" to hear our father preach and in the evenings to Christian

Endeavor and afterwards to "evening services" to hear our father preach again. In between on Sunday afternoons we had to study *The Westminster Shorter Catechism* for an hour and then recite before we could walk the hills with him while he unwound between services. But he never asked us more than the first question in the catechism, "What is the chief end of man?" And we answered together so one of us could carry on if the other forgot, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever." This always seemed to satisfy him, as indeed such a beautiful answer should have, and besides he was anxious to be on the hills where he could restore his soul and be filled again to overflowing for the evening sermon. His chief way of recharging himself was to recite to us from the sermon that was coming, enriched here and there with selections from the most successful passages of his morning sermon.

Even so, in a typical week of our childhood Paul and I probably received as many hours of instruction in fly fishing as we did in all other spiritual matters.

After my brother and I became good fishermen, we realized that our father was not a great fly caster, but he was accurate and stylish and wore a glove on his casting hand. As he buttoned his glove in preparation to giving us a lesson, he would say, "It is an art that is performed on a four-count rhythm between ten and two o'clock."

As a Scot and a Presbyterian, my father believed that man by nature was a mess and had fallen from an original state of grace. Somehow, I early developed the notion that he had done this by falling from a tree. As for my father, I

never knew whether he believed God was a mathematician but he certainly believed God could count and that only by picking up God's rhythms were we able to regain power and beauty. Unlike many Presbyterians, he often used the word "beautiful."

After he buttoned his glove, he would hold his rod straight out in front of him, where it trembled with the beating of his heart. Although it was eight and a half feet long, it weighed only four and a half ounces. It was made of split bamboo cane from the far-off Bay of Tonkin. It was wrapped with red and blue silk thread, and the wrappings were carefully spaced to make the delicate rod powerful but not so stiff it could not tremble.

Always it was to be called a rod. If someone called it a pole, my father looked at him as a sergeant in the United States Marines would look at a recruit who had just called a rifle a gun.

My brother and I would have preferred to start learning how to fish by going out and catching a few, omitting entirely anything difficult or technical in the way of preparation that would take away from the fun. But it wasn't by way of fun that we were introduced to our father's art. If our father had had his say, nobody who did not know how to fish would be allowed to disgrace a fish by catching him. So you too will have to approach the art Marine- and Presbyterian-style, and, if you have never picked up a fly rod before, you will soon find it factually and theologically true that man by nature is a damn mess. The four-and-a-half-ounce thing in silk wrappings that trembles with the underskin motions of the flesh becomes a stick

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Session Four

DISCOVER YOUR VOICE

- Your **voice** is the way you speak in public at your practiced best.
- Make your voice confident and confiding. Use humor and irony.
- When dealing with a painful subject, try not to “wallow” but to “bear witness”.

CONSISTENCIES

- You must do research to get public facts correct and you must edit so as not to contradict your own statements.
- **External Consistency.** Make sure the memoir facts line up with the real world. For example, if grandma was born in 1910, don't report that Teddy Roosevelt was president.
- **Internal Consistency.** Make sure the memoir facts line up within the text. For example, what you say on page 10 meshes with what you say on page 20.

MOVING AROUND IN TIME

- One of the hardest things to do elegantly is to move around in time without confusing your reader.
- A memoir is typically written in the past tense. Therefore, know the tenses: Present, Past, Present Perfect, and Past Perfect.
- Diagram the time span covered in the memoir, maybe composing a timeline for each character.

VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

Alternative of "Very "

Very active → Dynamic	Very firm → Strong
Very afraid → Fearful	Very fresh → Crisp
Very alert → Watchful	Very friendly → Warm
Very angry → Upset	Very full → Packed
Very annoying → Bothersome	Very glad → Joyful
Very calm → Peaceful	Very good → Superb
Very cheap → Affordable	Very great → Remarkable
Very cheerful → Sunny	Very green → Verdant
Very clear → Evident	Very happy → Cheerful
Very clever → Sharp	Very hard → Difficult
Very close → Intimate	Very high → Elevated
Very colorful → Brilliant	Very hot → Searing
Very common → Typical	Very huge → Immense
Very confused → Puzzled	Very important → Significant
Very crowded → Bustling	Very kind → Considerate
Very deep → Profound	Very large → Gigantic
Very different → Divergent	Very light → Airy
Very dry → Arid	Very long → Lengthy
Very easy → Straightforward	Very loose → Baggy
Very empty → Bare	Very loud → Noisy
Very excited → Eager	Very lovely → Delightful
Very expensive → Pricey	Very new → Brand-new
Very fast → Brisk	Very old → Timeworn
Very fierce → Intense	Very rich → Affluent
Very fine → Delicate	Very tired → Fatigued

Six Tenses in English

Present – *I go*

Present Perfect – *I have gone*

Past – *I went*

Past Perfect- *I had gone*

Future – *I will go*
gone

Future Perfect – *I will have*

Three Forms for English Tenses

Simple – *I go*

Continuous – *I am going*

Emphatic – *I do go*

Reading 4

Cheryl Strayed

wild

FROM LOST TO FOUND ON THE PACIFIC CREST TRAIL

1

THE TEN THOUSAND THINGS

My solo three-month hike on the Pacific Crest Trail had many beginnings. There was the first, flip decision to do it, followed by the second, more serious decision to *actually* do it, and then the long third beginning, composed of weeks of shopping and packing and preparing to do it. There was the quitting my job as a waitress and finalizing my divorce and selling almost everything I owned and saying goodbye to my friends and visiting my mother's grave one last time. There was the driving across the country from Minneapolis to Portland, Oregon, and, a few days later, catching a flight to Los Angeles and a ride to the town of Mojave and another ride to the place where the PCT crossed a highway.

At which point, at long last, there was the actual doing it, quickly followed by the grim realization of what it meant to do it, followed by the decision to quit doing it because doing it was absurd and pointless and ridiculously difficult and far more than I expected doing it would be and I was profoundly unprepared to do it.

And then there was the real live truly doing it.

The staying and doing it, in spite of everything. In spite of the bears and the rattlesnakes and the scat of the mountain lions I never saw; the blisters and scabs and scrapes and lacerations. The exhaustion and the deprivation; the cold and the heat; the monotony and the pain; the thirst and the hunger; the glory and the ghosts that haunted me as I hiked

eleven hundred miles from the Mojave Desert to the state of Washington by myself.

And finally, once I'd actually gone and done it, walked all those miles for all those days, there was the realization that what I'd thought was the beginning had not really been the beginning at all. That in truth my hike on the Pacific Crest Trail hadn't begun when I made the snap decision to do it. It had begun before I even imagined it, precisely four years, seven months, and three days before, when I'd stood in a little room at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, and learned that my mother was going to die.

I was wearing green. Green pants, green shirt, green bow in my hair. It was an outfit that my mother had sewn—she'd made clothes for me all of my life. Some of them were just what I dreamed of having, others less so. I wasn't crazy about the green pantsuit, but I wore it anyway, as a penance, as an offering, as a talisman.

All that day of the green pantsuit, as I accompanied my mother and stepfather, Eddie, from floor to floor of the Mayo Clinic while my mother went from one test to another, a prayer marched through my head, though *prayer* is not the right word to describe that march. I wasn't humble before God. I didn't even believe in God. My prayer was not: *Please, God, take mercy on us.*

I was not going to ask for mercy. I didn't need to. My mother was forty-five. She looked fine. For a good number of years she'd mostly been a vegetarian. She'd planted marigolds around her garden to keep bugs away instead of using pesticides. My siblings and I had been made to swallow raw cloves of garlic when we had colds. People like my mother did not get cancer. The tests at the Mayo Clinic would prove that, refuting what the doctors in Duluth had said. I was certain of this. Who were those doctors in Duluth anyway? What was Duluth? *Duluth!* Duluth was a freezing hick town where doctors who didn't know what the hell they were talking about told forty-five-year-old vegetarian-ish, garlic-eating, natural-remedy-using nonsmokers that they had late-stage lung cancer, that's what.

Fuck them.

That was my prayer: *Fuckthemfuckthemfuckthem.*

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Session Five

FOUR PARTS OF YOUR WRITING

- **Scene** deals with a short span of time, something like the actual time it takes for the scene to unravel in life.
- **Summary** covers a lot of time in a few paragraphs.
- **Background** or **Retrospective** fills in information needed to grasp the story.
- **Musing** is an important element in memoir. It is the narrator reflecting on the story.

PARAGRAPHS

- Paragraphs are the unit of thought.
- Words, phrases, and sentences build the paragraph.
- The paragraph builds the section, chapter, and book.
- In dialog, a change in speaker requires a change in paragraph.

VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

English Vocabulary: *Difficult vs. Easy:*

1. **Recalcitrant** – disobedient
2. **Surreptitious** – secret or sneaky
3. **Tenuous** – weak or thin
4. **Untenable** – not defensible
5. **Vacuous** – empty or stupid
6. **Wistful** – longing or sad
7. **Xenial** – hospitable
8. **Yawp** – loud cry or shout
9. **Zephyr** – light breeze
10. **Abject** – miserable
11. **Capitulate** – give up
12. **Disparage** – belittle
13. **Efface** – erase
14. **Frenetic** – frantic
15. **Galvanize** – motivate



Most of the time, strive for the active voice.
Sometimes, the passive voice cannot be avoided.

In English grammar, the passive voice is a grammatical construction where the grammatical subject receives the action of the verb, rather than performing it. This is typically achieved by using a form of the auxiliary verb "to be" and the past participle of the main verb.

Active voice: *I open the door.*

Passive voice: *The door was opened by me.*

Active voice: *I made mistakes.*

Passive voice: *Mistakes were made (by me?).*

The Diary of a Young Girl - Anne Frank

Reading 5

SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 1942

I'll begin from the moment I got you, the moment I saw you lying on the table among my other birthday presents. (I went along when you were bought, but that doesn't count.)

On Friday, June 12, I was awake at six o'clock, which isn't surprising, since it was my birthday. But I'm not allowed to get up at that hour, so I had to control my curiosity until quarter to seven. When I couldn't wait any longer, I went to the dining room, where Moortje (the cat) welcomed me by rubbing against my legs.

A little after seven I went to Daddy and Mama and then to the living room to open my presents, and you were the first thing I saw, maybe one of my nicest presents. Then a bouquet of roses, some peonies and a potted plant. From Daddy and Mama I got a blue blouse, a game, a bottle of grape juice, which to my mind tastes a bit like wine (after all, wine is made from grapes), a puzzle, a jar of cold cream, 2.50 guilders and a gift certificate for two books. I got another book as well, Camera Obscura (but Margot already has it, so I exchanged mine for something else), a platter of homemade cookies (which I made myself, of course, since I've become quite an expert at baking cookies), lots of candy and a strawberry tart from Mother. And a letter from Grammy, right on time, but of course that was just a coincidence.

Then Hanneli came to pick me up, and we went to school. During recess I passed out cookies to my teachers and my class, and then it was time to get back to work. I didn't arrive home until five, since I went to gym with the rest of the class. (I'm not allowed to take part because my shoulders and hips tend to get dislocated.) As it was my birthday, I got to decide which game my classmates would play, and I chose volleyball. Afterward they all danced around me in a circle and sang "Happy Birthday." When I got home, Sanne Ledermann was already there. Ilse Wagner, Hanneli Goslar and Jacqueline van Maarsen came home with me after gym, since we're in the same class. Hanneli and Sanne used to be my two best friends. People who saw us together used to say, "There goes Anne, Hanne and Sanne." I only met Jacqueline van Maarsen when I started at the Jewish Lyceum, and now she's my best friend. Ilse is Hanneli's best friend, and Sanne goes to another school and has friends there.

They gave me a beautiful book, Dutch Sasas and Lesends, but they gave me Volume II by mistake, so I exchanged two other books for Volume I. Aunt Helene brought me a puzzle, Aunt Stephanie a darling brooch and Aunt Leny a terrific book: Daisy Goes to the Mountains.

This morning I lay in the bathtub thinking how wonderful it would be if I had a dog like Rin Tin Tin. I'd call him Rin Tin Tin too, and I'd take him to school with me, where he could stay in the janitor's room or by the bicycle racks when the weather was good.

I had my birthday party on Sunday afternoon. The Rin Tin Tin movie was a big hit with my classmates. I got two brooches, a bookmark and two books. I'll start by saying a few things about my school and my class, beginning with the students.

Betty Bloemendaal looks kind of poor, and I think she probably is. She lives on some obscure street in West Amsterdam, and none of us know where it is. She does very well at school, but that's because she works so hard, not because she's so smart. She's pretty quiet.

Jacqueline van Maarsen is supposedly my best friend, but I've never had a real friend. At first I thought Jacque would be one, but I was badly mistaken.

Memoir Writing

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Session Six

THINK CINEMATICALY

- For many people--especially for those who are fans of motion pictures--visualize your narrative as one might view a movie or compose a movie script.



Nine ways to boost your writing motivation (that actually work) ~ Tucker Max

1. Don't Confuse Motivation with Passion
2. Outline First
3. Create Small, Attainable Goals
4. Make It a Daily Practice
5. Don't Be Perfect—Vomit on the Page
6. Focus on the Reader
7. Practice Self-Care
8. Announce the Book
9. Recognize and Face Your Fear

<https://scribemedia.com/writing-motivation/>

C.S. Lewis Advice on Writing

TO A SCHOOLGIRL IN AMERICA, *who had written (at her teacher's suggestion) to request advice on writing.*

14 December 1959

It is very hard to give any general advice about writing. Here's my attempt.

- (1) Turn off the Radio.
- (2) Read all the good books you can, and avoid nearly all magazines.
- (3) Always write (and read) with the ear, not the eye. You shd. hear every sentence you write as if it was being read aloud or spoken. If it does not sound nice, try again.
- (4) Write about what really interests you, whether it is real things or imaginary things, and nothing else. (Notice this means that if you are interested only in writing you will never be a writer, because you will have nothing to write about . . .)

(5) Take great pains to be clear. Remember that though you start by knowing what you mean, the reader doesn't, and a single ill-chosen word may lead him to a total misunderstanding. In a story it is terribly easy just to forget that you have not told the reader something that he wants to know—the whole picture is so clear in your own mind that you forget that it isn't the same in his.

(6) When you give up a bit of work don't (unless it is hopelessly bad) throw it away. Put it in a drawer. It may come in useful later. Much of my best work, or what I think my best, is the re-writing of things begun and abandoned years earlier.

(7) Don't use a typewriter. The noise will destroy your sense of rhythm, which still needs years of training

(8) Be sure you know the meaning (or meanings) of every word you use.

VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

English Vocabulary: Difficult vs. easy

1. Acrimonious - bitter
2. Belligerent - aggressive
3. Capitulate - give in
4. Disseminate - spread
5. Enigmatic - mysterious
6. Fluctuate - change
7. Harangue - lecture
8. Indigent - poor
9. Juvenescent - youthful
10. Loquacious - talkative
11. Mollify - soften, calm
12. Nebulous - unclear
13. Obfuscate - confuse
14. Recalcitrant - stubborn
15. Sagacious - wise



General English



TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE VERBS

Transitive Verbs

Transitive verbs need an object to complete their meaning.

- We **liked** the match.
- I **closed** the door.
- He **caught** the ball.
- She **visited** me at school.
- I **saw** an endangered animal.
- She **told** me the way to get there.
- I **like** trees.

Intransitive Verbs

Intransitive verbs cannot have a direct object after them.

- We **arrived** in the afternoon..
- She **coughed** strangely.
- Your dog **barks** a lot.
- His father **arrived** last night.
- The sun **rose** quickly.
- I **was sleeping**.
- The game **was** not funny and nobody **laughed**.

“He feels good.” or “He feels well.”

Reading 6

LITTLE HOUSE

on the PRAIRIE

BY *Laura Ingalls Wilder*

GOING WEST

A long time ago, when all the grandfathers and grandmothers of today were little boys and little girls or very small babies, or perhaps not even born, Pa and Ma and Mary and Laura and Baby Carrie left their little house in the Big Woods of Wisconsin. They drove away and left it lonely and empty in the clearing among the big trees, and they never saw that little house again.

They were going to the Indian country.

Pa said there were too many people in the Big Woods now. Quite often Laura heard the

ringing thud of an ax which was not Pa's ax, or the echo of a shot that did not come from his gun. The path that went by the little house had become a road. Almost every day Laura and Mary stopped their playing and stared in surprise at a wagon slowly creaking by on that road.

Wild animals would not stay in a country where there were so many people. Pa did not like to stay, either. He liked a country where the wild animals lived without being afraid. He liked to see the little fawns and their mothers looking at him from the shadowy woods, and the fat, lazy bears eating berries in the wild-berry patches.

In the long winter evenings he talked to Ma about the Western country. In the West the land was level, and there were no trees. The grass grew thick and high. There the wild animals wandered and fed as though they were in a pasture that stretched much farther than a man could see, and there were no settlers. Only Indians lived there.

One day in the very last of the winter Pa said to Ma, "Seeing you don't object, I've decided to go see the West. I've had an offer for this

place, and we can sell it now for as much as we're ever likely to get, enough to give us a start in a new country."

"Oh, Charles, must we go now?" Ma said. The weather was so cold and the snug house was so comfortable.

Memoir Writing

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Session Seven

All Writing Is Re-writing

1. Check for mis-spellings, repeated and omitted words, punctuation.
2. Examine word choice, especially verbs, then nouns. Upgrade common to precise wording.
3. As you re-read, if you inadvertently speak out loud a different word, it's probably a better choice.
4. Consider consistency. Does what you've just written mesh with previous material?
5. Rearrange paragraphs, join them, separate them, eliminate them if necessary.
6. Check your time flow. Prior events nearly always belong before later ones.
7. If a significant name or place appears abruptly, you may want to provide words of introduction.

Getting Started on Your Memoir

5 ELEMENTS of Memoir

Memoir tells a compelling story using truth, theme, 1st person POV narration, voice, and a fifth element—the M&Ms of writing, Memory and Musing.

1. TRUTH

It really happened. We know the trouble writers can get into by not remembering this. But the bigger dilemma is how not telling the truth leaves the reader; it not only weakens the relationship with the author, it destroys it. No longer trust them. This can be tricky because not everything in a memoir is word for word true. Who can remember exactly what their dad said at breakfast fifty years ago? Dialogue serves to further the theme.

In memoir, the author stands behind her story saying to the readers, "This happened; this is true." What is important about this is that the reader believes the story is true, which in turn requires the writer to be rigorously honest.

2. THEME Memoir is different from autobiography in choice of subject matter.

JB: "An autobiography is a story of a life: name implies that the writer will somehow attempt to capture all essential elements of that life. ...Memoir, on the other hand, makes no pretense of replicating a whole life. Indeed, one of the important skills of memoir writing is the selection of the theme or themes that will bind the work together..."

3. VOICE

JB: "Voice has been said to be the fingerprint of the writer, not the person on the page... The writer with her own particular linguistic quirks, sentence rhythms, recurring images.

4. POV- First Person Narrative

First person (singular): I—"I woke up this morning." The narrator is the protagonist; the person who is telling story.

JB: "Separating yourself as a writer from yourself as protagonist will help give you necessary perspective to craft memoir as a story. It will also decrease the degree to which you feel exposed as others critique your work."

5. THE ONGOING ATTEMPT TO ARRIVE AT ANSWERS

Memoir is about perception. What is important/significant about a particular set of events? What do you remember about a certain event? Why? What did you think when it happened? What do you think now? The M&Ms of memoir. In a sense, in writing memoir "It **is** all about you."

Suggestions for Writing Memoir

1. Utilize 5 Elements of Memoir: Truth, Theme, Voice, POV, Musing
2. Be with writers. They are brave.
3. Think of a family story you have told or have heard told many times. Decide what the theme of the story is. Write the story down.
4. Make a list of your family's or other close-knit group's classic stories—those you always hear at family occasions. Make notes on what purpose you think the story serves, or what myths it fosters in family or group.
5. Keep track of 'scenes', little windows on your life (JB), pieces of conversation, then connect them. LA calls them 'snippets.' ELM calls them 'seedlings.'
6. Write 10 defining moments in your life. Group them according to categories. Are there themes? (loss, birth, love, moving, change, success, tragedy, ambition, relationships, coming of age)

Ethel Lee-Miller *Thinking of Miller Place: A Memoir of Summer Comfort* (ELM)

Lorraine Ash- *Life Touches Life: A Mother's Story of Stillbirth and Healing; Self and Soul* (LA)

Judith Barrington- *Writing a Memoir* (JB)

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VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

ENGLISH WORDS

ADVANCED

English Par Excellence

1. Rapacious – Greedy
2. Hapless – Unlucky
3. Apocryphal – False
4. Juxtapose – Compare
5. Egregious – Shocking
6. Effulgent – Radiant
7. Mellifluous – Sweet-sounding
8. Pusillanimous – Cowardly
9. Esoteric – Mysterious
10. Sanguine – Hopeful
11. Baleful – Menacing
12. Quixotic – Unrealistic
13. Bellicose – Warlike
14. Timorous – Timid
15. Venerate – Respect
16. Churlish – Rude
17. Tantamount – Equal to
18. Obsequious – Overly obedient

BASIC

OCTOPUS PLURAL

OCTOPUS



OCTOPUSES



SPELLING RULES - PLURAL NOUNS

Regular Noun	ends in s, ch, sh, x or z	ends in f or fe
add -S	add -ES	remove f/fe add -VES
apple apples bat bats car cars frog frogs kite kites	bus buses match matches wish wishes fox foxes quiz quizzes	calf calves wolf wolves knife knives exceptions : roof - roofs cliff - cliffs
ends in vowel+y	ends in consonant+y	Irregular Nouns
add -S	remove y add -ies	the rule breakers
boy boys key keys day days toy toys monkey monkeys	baby babies story stories lady ladies party parties country countries	man men woman women child children tooth teeth foot feet person people
ends in vowel+o	ends in consonant+o	No Change
add -S	add -ES	spelling remains same
zoo zoos kangaroo kangaroos video videos radio radios stereo stereos	tomato tomatoes potato potatoes hero heroes echo echoes exceptions : photo - photos piano - pianos	sheep sheep deer deer fish fish swine swine

www.splendidmoms.co.in

Foreign-derived words often keep their foreign plural:

● Ellipsis → **Ellipses**

● Analysis → **Analyses**

● Datum → **Data**

● Apex → **Apices**

Reading 7

NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

CHAPTER I.

I WAS born in Tuckahoe, near Hillsborough, and about twelve miles from Easton, in Talbot county, Maryland. I have no accurate knowledge of my age, never having seen any authentic record containing it. By far the larger part of the slaves know as little of their ages as horses know of theirs, and it is the wish of most masters within my knowledge to keep their slaves thus ignorant. I do not remember to have ever met a slave who could tell of his birthday. They seldom come nearer to it than planting-time, harvest-time, cherry-time, spring-time, or fall-time. A want of information concerning my own was a source of unhappiness to me even during childhood. The white children could tell their ages. I could not tell why I ought to be deprived of the same privilege. I was not allowed to make any inquiries of my master concerning it. He deemed all such inquiries on the part of a slave improper and impertinent, and evidence of

1

2

NARRATIVE OF THE

a restless spirit. The nearest estimate I can give makes me now between twenty-seven and twenty-eight years of age. I come to this, from hearing my master say, some time during 1835, I was about seventeen years old.

My mother was named Harriet Bailey. She was the daughter of Isaac and Betsey Bailey, both colored, and quite dark. My mother was of a darker complexion than either my grandmother or grandfather.

My father was a white man. He was admitted to be such by all I ever heard speak of my parentage. The opinion was also whispered that my master was my father; but of the correctness of this opinion, I know nothing; the means of knowing was withheld from me. My mother and I were separated when I was but an infant—before I knew her as my mother. It is a common custom, in the part of Maryland from which I ran away, to part children from their mothers at a very early age. Frequently, before the child has reached its twelfth month, its mother is taken from it, and hired out on some farm a considerable distance off, and the child is placed under the care of an old woman, too old for field labor. For what this separation is done, I do not know, unless it be to hinder the development of the child's affection toward its mother, and to blunt and destroy the natural affection of the mother for the child. This is the inevitable result.

I never saw my mother, to know her as such, more than four or five times in my life; and each of these times was very short in duration, and at night. She was hired by a Mr. Stewart, who lived about twelve

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Session Eight

ACQUIRE A WRITER'S REFERENCE

Main Menu

Using A Writer's Reference

The menu to the right displays the book's contents as briefly and simply as possible. The color-coded arrows lead you to the appropriate tabbed dividers, which contain more detailed menus for each section.

At the back of the book you will find other reference aids:

- a detailed menu
- a list of revision symbols
- an ESL menu
- the index

To learn more about the book's reference aids, turn to "How to use this book" (p. v), which includes tutorials that show you how to get quick answers to your questions.

Companion Web site at dianahacker.com/writersref

Cross-referenced throughout the book, this resource includes over a thousand interactive writing, grammar, and research exercises; model papers; Language Debates; a links library; and other useful tools for writers and their instructors. To learn more about the companion site, turn to page vii.

Note to instructors

A CD-ROM version of the text, *An Electronic Writer's Reference*, is available either as a stand-alone item or for site licensing or packaging with the text. The software covers all of the topics in this print version and includes more than a thousand interactive exercises with customized feedback written by Diana Hacker.

Composition / Style

C omposing and revising

- C1** Planning
- C2** Drafting
- C3** Revising
- C4** Writing paragraphs
- C5** Constructing arguments
SAMPLE PAPER
- C6** Evaluating arguments

D ocument design

- D1** Principles of document design
- D2** Academic manuscript formats
- D3** Business documents
- D4** Electronic documents

S entence style

- S1** Parallelism
- S2** Needed words
- S3** Problems with modifiers
- S4** Shifts
- S5** Mixed constructions
- S6** Emphasis
- S7** Variety

W ord choice

- W1** Glossary of usage
- W2** Wordy sentences
- W3** Active verbs
- W4** Appropriate language
- W5** Exact language
- W6** The dictionary and thesaurus

Correctness

G rammatical sentences

- G1** Subject-verb agreement
- G2** Other problems with verbs
- G3** Problems with pronouns
- G4** Adjectives and adverbs
- G5** Sentence fragments
- G6** Run-on sentences

ESL T rouble spots

- T1** Articles
- T2** Special problems with verbs
- T3** Sentence structure
- T4** Other trouble spots

P unctuation

- P1** The comma
- P2** Unnecessary commas
- P3** The semicolon
- P4** The colon
- P5** The apostrophe
- P6** Quotation marks
- P7** Other marks

M echanics

- M1** Spelling
- M2** The hyphen
- M3** Capitalization
- M4** Abbreviations
- M5** Numbers
- M6** Italics (underlining)

Research/Basic Grammar

R esearching

- R1** Conducting research
- R2** Evaluating sources
- R3** Managing information; avoiding plagiarism
- R4** Choosing a style of documentation

MLA papers

- MLA-1** Supporting a thesis
- MLA-2** Avoiding plagiarism
- MLA-3** Integrating sources
- MLA-4** Documenting sources
- MLA-5** Manuscript format
SAMPLE PAPER

APA and CMS papers

(Coverage parallels MLA's)

APA-1	CMS-1
APA-2	CMS-2
APA-3	CMS-3
APA-4	CMS-4
APA-5	CMS-5

SAMPLE PAPER SAMPLE PAGES

B asic grammar

- B1** Parts of speech
- B2** Parts of sentences
- B3** Subordinate word groups
- B4** Sentence types

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The Elements of Style Strunk and White

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6. Do not break sentences in two.	7
7. Use a colon after an independent clause to introduce a list of particulars, an appositive, an amplification, or an illustrative quotation.	7
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VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

COMMON HOMONYMS

- A while - Awhile
- Accent - Ascent
- Adapt - Adopt
- Advice - Advise
- Ail - Ale
- Air - Heir
- Allowed - Aloud
- Altar - Alter
- Amend - Emend
- Appraise - Apprise
- Arc - Ark
- Ate - Eight
- Ate - Eight
- Bad - Bade
- Bail - Bale
- Bald - Bawled
- Ball - Bawl
- Bare - Bear
- Beach - Beech
- Bean - Been
- Bear - Bare
- Beat - Beet
- Bee - Be
- Beet - Beat
- Bell - Belle
- Berry - Bury
- Beside - Besides
- Birth - Berth
- Blue - Blew
- Boar - Bore
- Board - Bored
- Bough - Bow
- Bow - Bough
- Boy - Buoy
- Brake - Break
- Buy - By - Bye
- Capital - Capitol
- Ceiling - Sealing
- Cell - Sell
- Cent - Scent
- Cheap - Cheep
- Check - Cheque
- Cite - Sight - Site
- Coarse - Course
- Command - Commend
- Complement - Compliment
- Cord - Chord
- Council - Counsel
- Dear - Deer
- Die - Dye
- Dun - Done
- Dye - die
- Ewe - You
- Eye - I
- Fair - Fare
- Feat - Feet
- Flew - Flu



Helping verbs, also known as auxiliary verbs, are used with main verbs to express tense, aspect, modality, and voice. They add grammatical information to the sentence but do not carry the main meaning of the action.

Am	Is	Are	Was
Were	Being	Been	Be
Has	Have	Had	Did
Shall	Will	Should	Would
May	Might	Must	Can
Could	Does	Do	

Spell-check won't catch these

Reading 8

THE CONFESSIONS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE by Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, AD 401

Translated by E. B. Pusey (Edward Bouverie)

~ His sixteenth Year ~

Theft is punished by Thy law, O Lord, and the law written in the hearts of men, which iniquity itself effaces not. For what thief will abide a thief? not even a rich thief, one stealing through want. Yet I lusted to thieve, and did it, compelled by no hunger, nor poverty, but through a cloyedness of well-doing, and a pamperedness of iniquity. For I stole that, of which I had enough, and much better. Nor cared I to enjoy what I stole, but joyed in the theft and sin itself. A pear tree there was near our vineyard, laden with fruit, tempting neither for colour nor taste. To shake and rob this, some lewd young fellows of us went, late one night (having according to our pestilent custom prolonged our sports in the streets till then), and took huge loads, not for our eating, but to fling to the very hogs, having only tasted them. And this, but to do what we liked only, because it was disliked. Behold my heart, O God, behold my heart, which Thou hadst pity upon in the bottom of the bottomless pit. Now, behold, let my heart tell Thee what it sought there, that I should be gratuitously evil, having no temptation to ill, but the ill itself. It was foul, and I loved it; I loved to perish, I loved mine own fault, not that for which I was faulty, but my fault itself. Foul soul, falling from Thy firmament to utter destruction; not seeking aught through the shame, but the shame itself!

For there is an attractiveness in beautiful bodies, in gold and silver, and all things; and in bodily touch, sympathy hath much influence, and each other sense hath his proper object answerably tempered. Worldly honour hath also its grace, and the power of overcoming, and of mastery; whence springs also the thirst of revenge. But yet, to obtain all these, we may not depart from Thee, O Lord, nor decline from Thy law. The life also which here we live hath its own enchantment, through a certain proportion of its own, and a correspondence with all things beautiful here below. Human friendship also is endeared with a sweet tie, by reason of the unity formed of many souls. Upon occasion of all these, and the like, is sin committed, while through an immoderate inclination towards these goods of the lowest order, the better and higher are forsaken,—Thou, our Lord God, Thy truth, and Thy law. For these lower things have their delights, but not like my God, who made all things; for in Him doth the righteous delight, and He is the joy of the upright in heart.

When, then, we ask why a crime was done, we believe it not, unless it appear that there might have been some desire of obtaining some of those which we called lower goods, or a fear of losing them. For they are beautiful and comely; although compared with those higher and beatific goods, they be abject and low. A man hath murdered another; why? he loved his wife or his estate; or would rob for his own livelihood; or feared to lose some such things by him; or, wronged, was on fire to be revenged. Would any commit murder upon no cause, delighted simply in murdering? who would believe it? for as for that furious and savage man, of whom it is said that he was gratuitously evil and cruel, yet is the cause assigned; "lest" (saith he) "through idleness hand or heart should grow inactive." And to what end? that, through that practice of guilt, he might, having taken the city, attain to honours, empire, riches, and be freed from fear of the laws, and his embarrassments from domestic needs, and consciousness of villainies. So then, not even Catiline himself loved his own villainies, but something else, for whose sake he did them.

What then did wretched I so love in thee, thou theft of mine, thou deed of darkness, in that sixteenth year of my age? Lovely thou wert not, because thou wert theft. But art thou any thing, that thus I speak to thee? Fair were the pears we stole, because they were Thy creation, Thou fairest of all, Creator of all, Thou good God; God, the sovereign good and my true good. Fair were those pears, but not them did my wretched soul desire; for I had store of better, and those I gathered, only that I might steal. For, when gathered, I flung them away, my only feast therein being my own sin, which I was pleased to enjoy. For if aught of those pears came within my mouth, what sweetened it was the sin. And now, O Lord my God, I enquire what in that theft delighted me; and behold it hath no loveliness; I mean not such loveliness as in justice and wisdom; nor such as is in the mind and memory, and senses, and animal life of man; nor yet as the stars are glorious and beautiful in their orbs; or the earth, or sea, full of embryo-life, replacing by its birth that which decayeth; nay, nor even that false and shadowy beauty which belongeth to deceiving vices.

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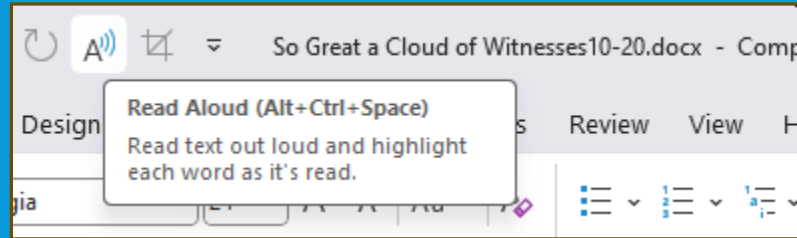
Session Nine

Three Suggestions To Spark Your Memory

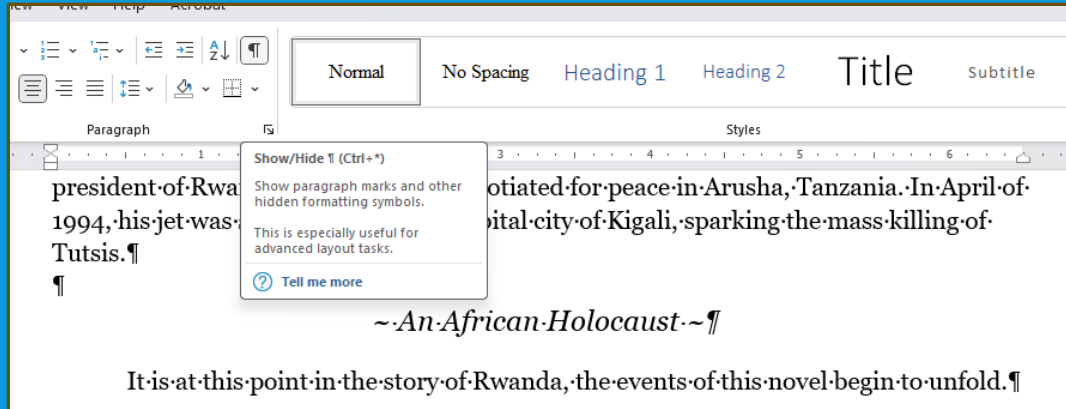
1. Think of important questions you would like to have asked your ancestor, but that opportunity has passed. Consider what your descendants would like to ask you.
2. Collect objects of memory as “pegs in time”: photos, videos, certificates, journals, letters, tax forms, and official records. Use them as touchstones to jog your memory and sequence your timeline.
3. Do on-line research in subjects related to your memoir—places, people, times. Weave the details into your narrative.

FULLY UTILIZE YOUR WORD PROCESSING TOOLS

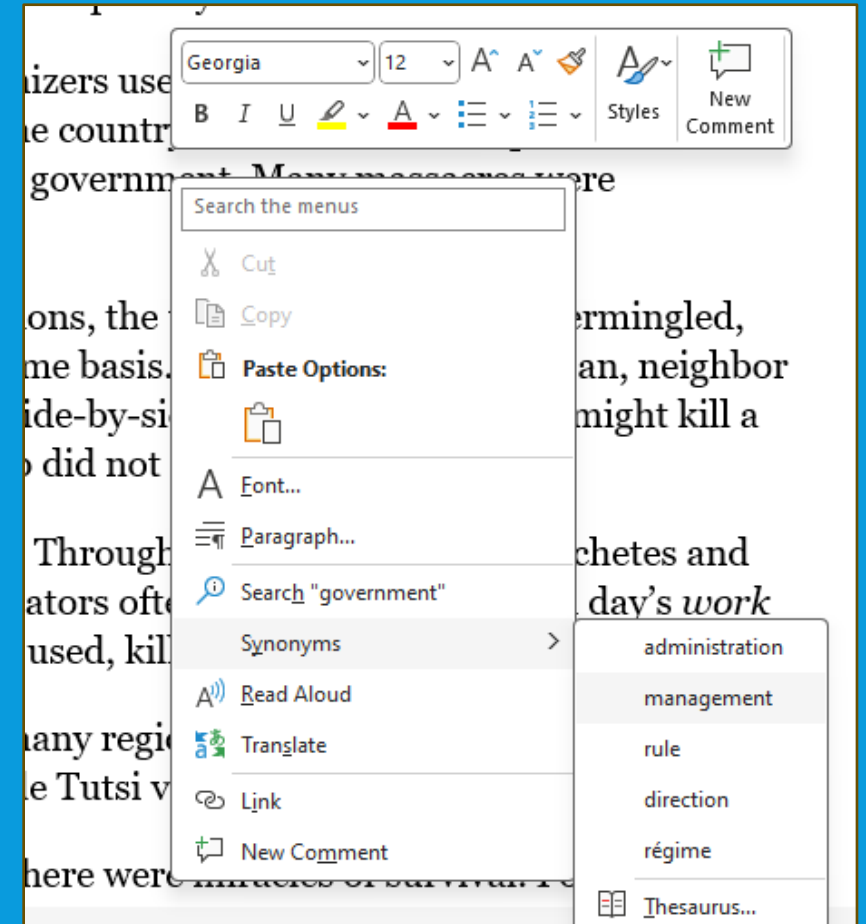
- Read Aloud



- Show/Hide



- Synonyms and Thesaurus (Right click on word)



VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

English Vocabulary: Difficult vs. Easy:

1. **Panacea** – *cure-all*
2. **Querulous** – *complaining*
3. **Rescind** – *cancel*
4. **Sycophant** – *flatterer*
5. **Tirade** – *angry speech*
6. **Umbrage** – *offense*
7. **Vacillate** – *waver*
8. **Winsome** – *charming*
9. **Xenophobic** – *afraid of foreigners*
10. **Yoke** – *join or bind*
11. **Zealous** – *passionate*
12. **Ambivalent** – *unsure*
13. **Blatant** – *obvious*
14. **Conundrum** – *puzzle or problem*
15. **Dearth** – *lack*

The Five Verb Moods

Indicative	
Examples	I saw a film at the weekend. Bananas grow on trees.
Use	The indicative mood expresses a fact. It is the verb mood we use the most often.
Imperative	
Examples	Do your homework! Don't worry! Cut along the lines carefully.
Form	The subject "you" is implied, so it isn't used. The verb is always in the second person.
Use	The imperative mood is used for commands, warnings, requests, advice, and instructions.
Interrogative	
Examples	What are you doing? Did you like the movie?
Form	(Question word) + auxiliary verb or be + subject + main verb
Use	The interrogative mood is used to ask questions.
Conditional	
Examples	If it rains, I'll take my umbrella. He'll be late if he doesn't hurry.
Form	if + present tense, will/won't + infinitive without "to" The contraction of will is 'll e.g., we'll
Use	To express a possible real situation in the future and its consequence.
Subjunctive	
Examples	The teacher required that the students prepare for the test. My father insisted that I not be late home.
Form	indicative clause + (that) + subject + infinitive without "to" (subjunctive clause) The subjunctive verb is the same for all persons To use a different tense, change the verb in the indicative clause. The subjunctive verb doesn't change. To make the negative, put not before the subjunctive verb.

Reading 9



YALA, SRI LANKA, DECEMBER 26, 2004

I thought nothing of it at first. The ocean looked a little closer to our hotel than usual. That was all. A white foamy wave had climbed all the way up to the rim of sand where the beach fell abruptly down to the sea. You never saw water on that stretch of sand. It was our friend Orlantha who alerted me. A short while before, she'd knocked on our door to ask if we were ready to leave. We almost were. Steve was in the shower, or reading on the toilet more likely. Our two boys were on the back veranda, buzzing around their Christmas presents.

This was Yala, a national park on the southeastern coast of Sri Lanka. White-bellied sea eagles abound here, and for Vikram they were the most splendid of birds. For a nearly eight-year-old, Vikram knew heaps about birds. A pair of sea eagles nested near the lagoon that edged this hotel in Yala, and he'd sit on a rock on the lagoon's shore and wait hours, hungry for a glimpse of them. They always turned up, as reliable as the tooth fairy.

We had spent four days here, with my parents. In less than a week Steve, the boys, and I would be flying home to London. We had driven down to Yala from Colombo on the morning after Malli's violin concert. Not that Malli had any commitment to the violin, it was being onstage he loved. He stood there and mimicked the little girl next to him, flourishing his bow with convincing exactness. "He's faking it, Mum, he's faking it," Vik

whispered to me that night at the concert, impressed by his five-year-old brother's brazen nerve.

Our friend Orlantha gave Malli violin lessons on our trips to Sri Lanka. She had taken a break from living in Los Angeles to teach in Colombo for a few years, and her children's orchestra was thriving. It was called Strings by the Sea.

Now Orlantha and I chatted in the doorway of this hotel room. We hadn't planned to come to Yala together, she was with her parents who were on holiday from the States. She watched the antics of my boys now and told me that she would love to start a family soon. "What you guys have is a dream," she said.

It was then she saw the wave. "Oh my God, the sea's coming in." That's what she said. I looked behind me. It didn't seem that remarkable. Or alarming. It was only the white curl of a big wave.

But you couldn't usually see breaking waves from our room. You hardly noticed the ocean at all. It was just a glint of blue above that wide spread of sand that sloped sharply down to the water. Now the froth of a wave had scaled up this slope and was nearing the tall conifers that were halfway between our room and the water's edge, incongruous those trees in this landscape of brittle thorny scrub. This was peculiar. I called out to Steve in the bathroom. "Come out, Steve, I want to show you something odd." I didn't want him to miss this. I wanted him to come out quick before all this foam dissolved. "In a minute," Steve muttered, with no intention of rushing out.

Then there was more white froth. And more. Vik was sitting by the back door reading the first page of *The Hobbit*. I told him to shut that door. It was a glass door with four panels, and he closed each one, then came across the room and stood by

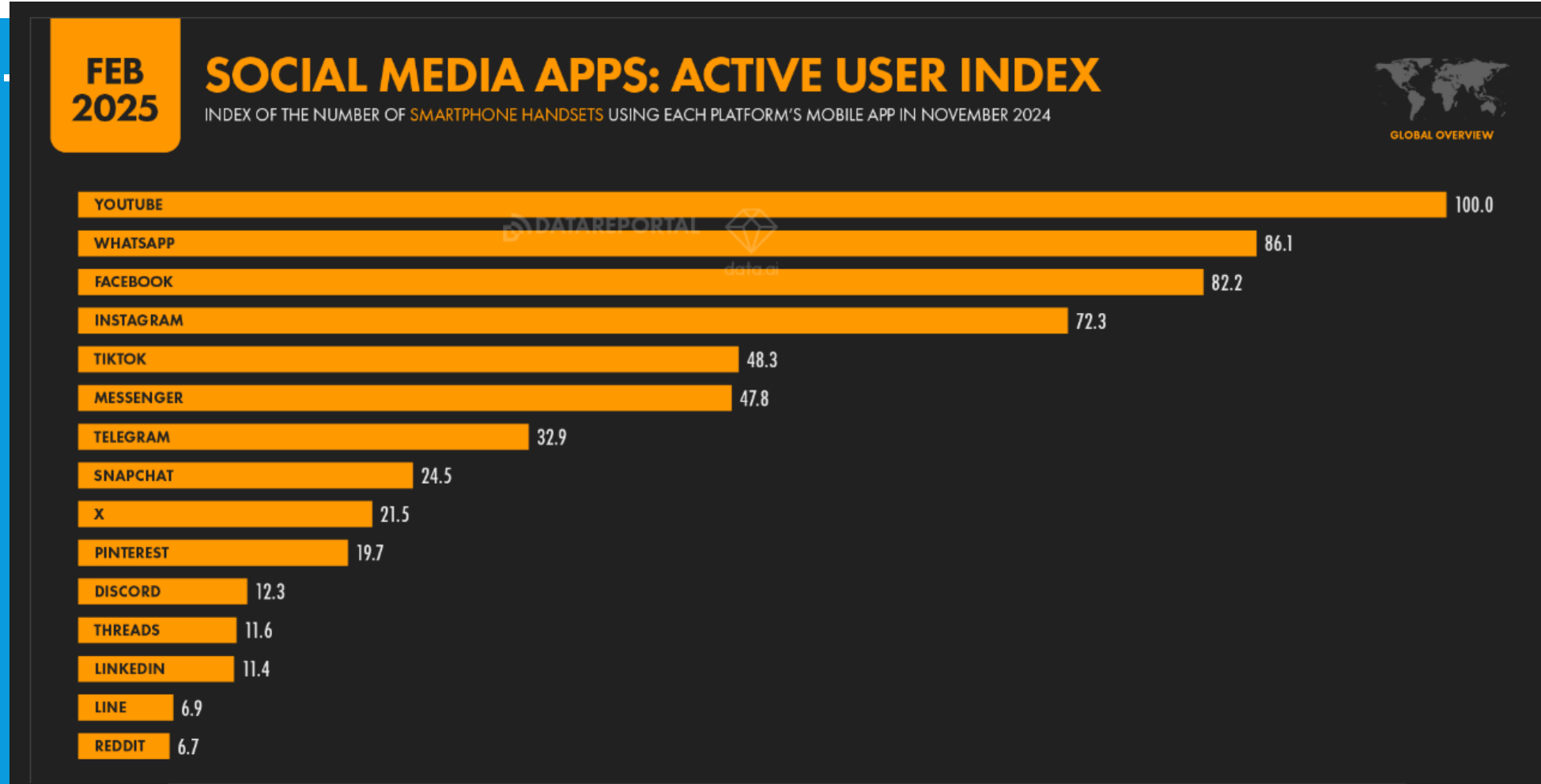
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APRIL 10, 2025

Hundreds of Potted Bare-Root Trees

Do you know... one large, mature tree can produce about 270-liters of oxygen a day? That's just nearly half of what the average human needs in a day. Our earth needs trees!

Every year I plant as many trees as possible here at my farm - it's one way I can give back to the environment and help create a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable planet for my grandchildren and for everyone. As you saw in yesterday's post, I recently received the season's first shipment of bare-root tree cuttings. Bare-roots are dug from the ground while dormant and stored without any soil surrounding their roots. And now they will thrive in nutrient-filled composted soil until they can be transplanted in the ground. Earth Day is coming up on April 22nd. I hope you plant a tree or two to celebrate.

Enjoy these photos and short video showing all 700 newly potted bare-roots!



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1

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3

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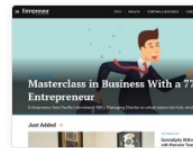
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4

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5

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6

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8,193

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My Online Universe

chrisalanforeman.com


Chris Alan Foreman

Writer of Memoir & Follower of Christ

"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else." ~ [C.S. Lewis](#)

My Monthly Journal
2020 - present

Life in 2025
in San Mateo



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Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.

Encapsulating [my life](#) in HTML [since 1995](#) 

Contact me at: chrisalanforeman@gmail.com

VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

English Vocabulary - Synonyms:

1. **Quell** – suppress, extinguish
2. **Reiterate** – repeat, restate
3. **Scrupulous** – meticulous, ethical
4. **Tantalize** – tease, tempt
5. **Unanimous** – agreed, united
6. **Viable** – workable, feasible
7. **Waver** – hesitate, falter
8. **Yoke** – bind, join
9. **Zephyr** – breeze, draft
10. **Abhor** – detest, loathe
11. **Blatant** – obvious, flagrant
12. **Censure** – condemn, criticize
13. **Deplete** – exhaust, drain
14. **Exacerbate** – worsen, intensify
15. **Frugal** – economical, thrifty

Case For Nouns and Pronouns

In English grammar, case refers to the form of a noun or pronoun that indicates its grammatical function within a sentence.

While English nouns generally have a single form, English pronouns exhibit distinct forms, notably in the possessive (e.g., my, mine) and objective (e.g., me, him) cases. The three main cases for pronouns are subjective (also called nominative), objective (also called accusative), and possessive (also called genitive). In English, the dative case, the indirect object, takes the same forms as the direct object

Here's a breakdown:

Subjective/Nominative Case: Used for pronouns that act as the subject of a verb (e.g., I, he, she, they).

Objective/Accusative Case: Used for pronouns that act as the direct or indirect object of a verb, or the object of a preposition (e.g., me, him, her, them).

Possessive Case: Used for pronouns that show ownership (e.g., my, mine, his, hers, their).

Example:

Subjective: He went to the store.

Objective: I saw him at the store.

Possessive: That is his car.

Reading 10

Speak, Memory

By Vladimir Nabokov

THE cradle rocks above an abyss, and common sense tells us that our existence is but a brief crack of light between two eternities of darkness. Although the two are identical twins, man, as a rule, views the prenatal abyss with more calm than the one he is heading for (at some forty-five hundred heartbeats an hour). I know, however, of a young chronophobiac who experienced something like panic when looking for the first time at homemade movies that had been taken a few weeks before his birth. He saw a world that was practically unchanged—the same house, the same people—and then realized that he did not exist there at all and that nobody mourned his absence. He caught a glimpse of his mother waving from an upstairs window, and that unfamiliar gesture disturbed him, as if it were some mysterious farewell. But what particularly frightened him was the sight of a brand-new baby carriage standing there on the porch, with the smug, encroaching air of a coffin; even that was empty, as if, in the reverse course of events, his very bones had disintegrated.

Such fancies are not foreign to young lives. Or, to put it otherwise, first and last things often tend to have an adolescent note—unless, possibly, they are directed by some venerable and rigid religion. Nature expects a full-grown man to accept the two black voids, fore and aft, as stolidly as he accepts the extraordinary visions in between. Imagination, the supreme delight of the immortal and the immature, should be limited. In order to enjoy life, we should not enjoy it too much.

I rebel against this state of affairs. I feel the urge to take my rebellion outside and picket nature. Over and over again, my mind has made colossal efforts to distinguish the faintest of personal glimmers in the impersonal darkness on both sides of my life. That this darkness is caused merely by the walls of time separating me and my bruised fists from the free world of timelessness is a belief I gladly share with the most gaudily painted savage. I have journeyed back in thought—with thought hopelessly tapering off as I went—to remote regions where I groped for some secret outlet only to discover that the prison of time is spherical and without exits. Short of suicide, I have tried everything.