

Year 6 – 7 English Transition Project



Autobiographical writing



Introduction

Hello Year 6! We hope you are safe, well and working as hard as you can be in these circumstances. We are very much looking forward to meeting you all at Lydiard Park Academy, especially here in the English department.

Our first topic when you join us in Year 7 is 'Autobiography'. Some of you may have read an autobiography or written your own autobiographical pieces before – you'll be able to use this knowledge in our future lessons. 😊

This project is designed for you to show off all of your creative writing skills to us. We will be asking you to **write a short story based on a real event in your life.**

You may wish to print this booklet out, or follow it and complete every activity neatly on paper or type it up on a computer – it is up to you. All we ask is that you **bring this work and your finished story with you in September**, as we will be using the work in our first lesson.

We look forward to meeting you all. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us:

Mrs R. Barrett / Ms S. Perkins: English KS3 co-ordinators
barrettr@lydiardparkacademy.org.uk perkinss@lydiardparkacademy.org.uk

Mr T. Johns: Head of English
johnst@lydiardparkacademy.org.uk

TASK 1: 'This is Me':

'This is Me'. As this booklet is focussed on autobiography, let's start by getting you thinking creatively about yourself.

<i>If I were:</i>	<i>I'd be...</i>	<i>because...</i>
<i>An animal</i>	<i>A cosy cat</i>	<i>I like the idea of sleeping for most of the day and being able to spring up high.</i>
<i>A car</i>		
<i>A place</i>		
<i>A colour</i>		
<i>A feeling</i>		
<i>A shape</i>		
<i>A dream</i>		
<i>A nightmare</i>		

TASK 2: Personal acrostic:

Use the letters of your name to write an acrostic poem about yourself. You could use just your first name or your surname as well. Or if you have a nickname, you could use that. Try to include lots of adjectives to describe yourself (adjectives = words that describe a noun) as well as phrases about yourself

e.g.

Fierce when angry,
Excellent at Maths
Loves potatoes!
Interested in animals,
Caring and kind.
Imaginative,
Tactile,
Young at heart.

Write your acrostic poem here:

TASK 3: Produce a time capsule:

Your task is to produce a time capsule to be opened at a point in the future. It is a personal capsule and will contain information about you as you are now- lots of facts plus your thoughts, hopes, and dreams. The capsule will also be a record of what life is like for you now and what is happening at home, at school, in the neighbourhood and in the world at large.

Your time capsule will go in an envelope so you can't put any large objects inside but photographs, drawings and writing will fit.

Complete one written task to put inside your time capsule, but you can do both if you wish. Either:

- A letter to yourself explaining who you are now, your hopes for the coming year and for the future after that perhaps. You could also explain what is on your mind at the moment and how you spend your time.

OR

- A diary written over no more than a week but which indicates what you get up to on a daily or even hourly basis.

Other suggestions about what to include:

- Lists (could be done as a series of Top Tens) of what music you are listening to, who your favourite performers are, best computer games, school subjects, hobbies, sports, people, places to visit, animals, celebrities and anything else that you enjoy. You might want to add some pet hates too: maybe a list of the ten things that really make you fed up.
- Recent photographs of yourself and your friends – you could go further and photograph what's in your pockets, what your classroom or bedroom is like, your toys, games and books and anything else that defines you as you are at the moment. A selfie or two with the people, clothing and objects that define who you are could be very useful.
- News headlines – today's items from the local or national press would be interesting to see when you open up your capsule. What was happening when it was sealed?
- Facts – describe yourself. Write a profile and add in a fact sheet where you give your age in years, months, weeks and days as well as measurements such as height, weight, length of arms, hat size, waist line, shoe size and any other vital statistics.
- Oughtobiography-What ought you do before opening the capsule? List five resolutions or five things you want to have done in the next few months.

Sealing your capsule:

You will need to make sure you have your name on it along with the date you sealed it up.

You should also include a not to be opened until September, 2020.

You might wish to draw a design on the capsule and warn people about the dangers of unauthorised opening.

Perhaps you could add a curse such as:

Whoever breaks this capsule's seal

Will pain and sorrow greatly feel.

If this is opened before it's due,

Terrible things will happen to you.

You could even describe the horrible things that might happen such as:

a plague of boils and itches,

being scratched by witches,

hair going white and falling out,

nose becoming a piggy's snout.

...or whatever you think is appropriate of course.

Alternatively, you might just label it as top secret and emphasise it is for your eyes only.

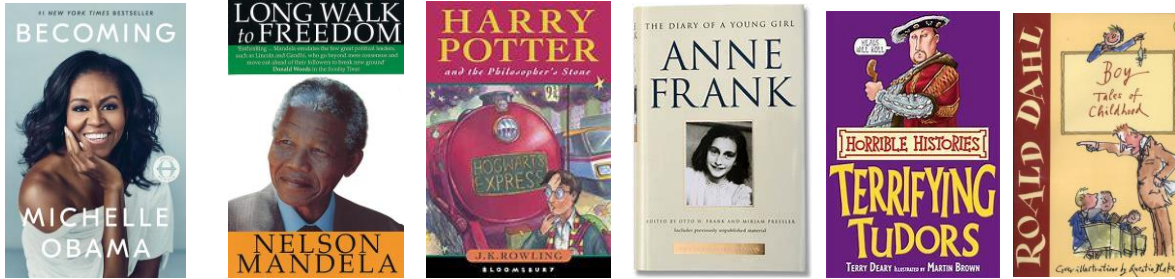
Bring the capsule to LPA and hand it in to your English teacher.

TASK 4: What is autobiography?

Autobiography: an account of a person's life written by that person.

Biography: an account of someone's life written by someone else.

Look at these book covers. Put a tick next to the ones which you think are autobiographies.



Features of autobiographies. Label these statements as either true or false:

Statement	True or false?
1. Autobiographies are written in first person	
2. Autobiographies are fictional	
3. Autobiographies tend to be written in chronological order	
4. Autobiographies are written in present tense	
5. Autobiographies are written in past tense	
6. Autobiographies contain no dialogue	
7. Autobiographies are written in 3 rd person	
8. Autobiographies include thoughts and feelings as well as dialogue	
9. Only celebrities write autobiographies	
10. Autobiographies have to include every moment of the author's life	

TASK 5: Read this extract from Jessica Ennis-Hill's autobiography, 'Unbelievable':

I am crying. I am a Sheffield schoolgirl writing in her diary about the bullies awaiting me tomorrow. They stand menacingly by the gates and lurk unseen in my head, mocking my size and status. They make a small girl shrink, and I feel insecure and frightened. I pour the feelings out into words on the page, as if exposing them in some way will help, but nobody sees my diary. It is kept in my room as a hidden tale of hurt. Fast forward two decades and I am crying again. I am standing in a cavernous arena in London. Suddenly, the pain and suffering and frustration give way to a flood of overwhelming emotion.

In the middle of this enormous arena I feel smaller than ever, but I puff out my chest, look to the flag and stand tall. It has been a long and winding road from the streets of Sheffield to the tunnel that feeds into the Olympic Stadium like an artery.

Now you are going to colour-code the extract. You will need 5 different colours.

- In one colour highlight/ underline all the thoughts and feelings.
- In another colour highlight / underline any description of setting.
- In another colour highlight / underline any description of character (Jessica)
- In another colour highlight / underline any adjectives.
- In another colour highlight / underline any adverbs.

Optional extension: Highlight / underline a simile and a metaphor.

TASK 6: Writing about a moment / event from your life:

You are going to write an autobiographical short story.

Choose **one** of the following titles for your writing:

Either (a) Write a story which begins:

As soon as I walked in, I could see something was wrong.

OR

(b) The surprise.

OR

(c) Write a story which ends:

As I walked away, I knew I'd done the right thing.

OR

(d) Write about a time when you found yourself in a difficult situation.

OR

(e) Write a story which begins:

I knew that I was going to have to give the performance of my life.

You need to base your autobiographical short story on **one** of the titles above, but it must be about something that took place over a short period of time.

E.g. Look at the title:

Write a story which begins: As soon as I walked in, I could see something was wrong.

This needs to be the first sentence of your story. Can you think of a moment in your life when this happened to you? Where were you? What was wrong? What happened?

E.g. Look at the title:

The Surprise.

Can you think of a moment in your life when someone surprised you in some way or a moment when you witnessed something surprising? What happened?

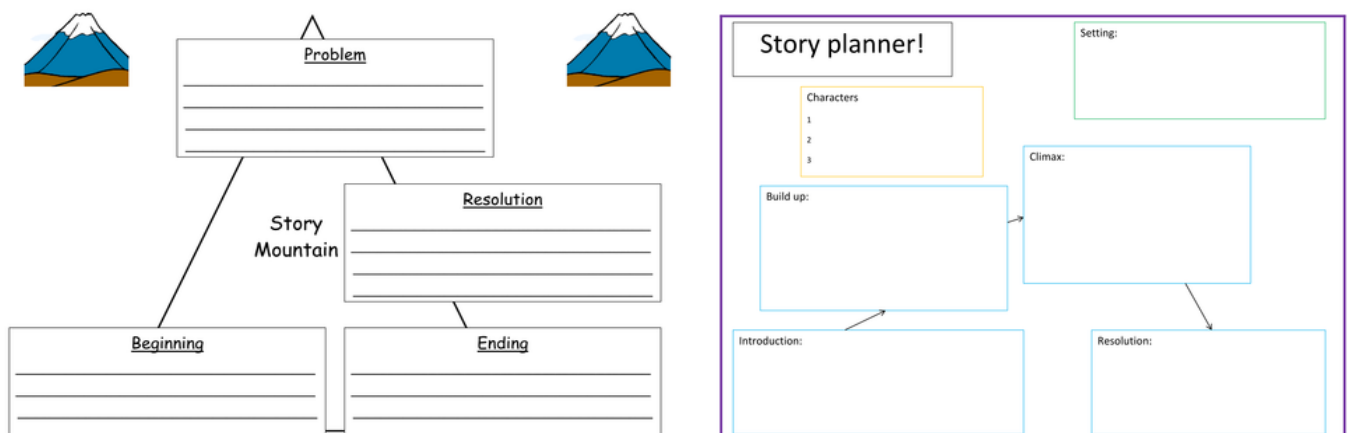
The key is to focus on the moment something happened – not a whole week or even a whole day. Write about that moment (and what happened moments before and moments after), but don't try to cover too much.

TASK 7: Plan your story:

Once you have chosen a title, you need to start planning your short story.

- If you try to include too much in your story, you will end up being a 300-page novel, not a short story! Therefore, you should aim to include no more than 3 characters and think carefully about the plot.
- Include the most interesting bits but not absolutely everything: you don't need to include every boring detail like what you ate for breakfast and brushing your teeth. Instead, think about how to keep the reader interested.
- All of these titles are for first person narratives (using 'I'). It does not need to be completely true, but should be based on a real-life experience and be written in first person.
- The best short stories focus on a small moment of time but describe it really well so think carefully about not trying to include too much.

Here are some ideas for how to create your plan – it's up to you what your plan looks like.



TASK 8: Write your first draft of your short autobiographical story.

- You can either hand write it on paper or you can type it. You should aim to write around 2 pages of A4. Think carefully about having a clear beginning, middle and end.
- Look back at the example from Jessica Ennis-Hill and try to include similar techniques in your writing.
- This is a first draft so it does not matter if you cross things out / change things. You will write it up in neat later.

Some sentence starters that might help you:

- This was a day that I knew I would remember...
- If you want to hear about my most special / embarrassing / awful / happy moment, please read on...
- My friends might think that ... but really ...
- My family love to talk about the time that I...

TASK 9: Peer or self-assessment:

You can either self-assess or peer-assess your work. To peer assess, you could ask a member of your family to read your autobiographical story and use the checklist below. Or you could show / email your work to a friend on Year 6 and then could peer-assess your story.

Success criteria:

- Is your story written in first person (and have you stayed in first person throughout)?
- Is your story written in past tense (and have you stayed in past tense throughout)?
- Does your story have a clear structure: engaging opening paragraph, build up, climax and resolution?
- Do you tell your story in chronological order?
- Have you given a clear account of what happened?
- Have you included the thoughts and feelings of your character(s)?
- Have you included detailed description of characters?
- Have you included detailed description of setting?
- Have you included a range of sentence types and lengths?
- Have you used interesting and ambitious vocabulary?
- Have you used a range of techniques to make your writing more interesting e.g. adjectives, adverbs, interesting verb choices?
- Have you used a range of punctuation such as question marks, exclamation marks, commas for clauses and speech marks?
- Have you checked your spelling carefully?

WWW (what went well): _____

HTI (how to improve): _____

TASK 10: Complete your autobiographical short story

Make improvements based on your feedback. Then write up the final draft of your narrative on lined paper (or type it). We can't wait to meet you and read your work in September! 😊

SUMMER READING RECOMMENDATIONS

- *Boy* by Roald Dahl
- *Unbelievable* by Jessica Ennis-Hill
- *The Secret of Nightingale Wood* by Lucy Strange
- *The Skylarks' War* by Hilary McKay
- *The Explorer* by Katherine Rundell

Optional extension idea: My Writer's Scrapbook

There are two main keys to success in English:

1. A love of reading (see our suggestions)
2. Becoming a successful writer

Creating a 'Writer's Scrapbook' will help you with ideas, vocabulary, mood and all sorts of aspects of writing as you learn at LPA. We can't wait to see what you have come up with when you arrive in our classrooms in Year 7.

The best idea is to get away from your screens and use an actual scrapbook that you can stick, write, draw, paint or collect things in. An exercise book or folder with loose leaf paper would work well. But an electronic version is acceptable too if that's the best way for you.

What should you include?

- Snippets of real-life conversations
- ~~Descriptions and pictures of interesting people~~
- Storylines from interesting TV or news
- Memories
- Photos of places you've been to
- Favourite words and phrases from reading
- Moods and senses
- **Observations and ideas**
- Thoughts and feelings
- Similes, metaphors, personification ...



This is **YOUR** writer's scrapbook
so fill it up with anything that inspires or interests you:
Things you **love**. Things you **hate**. **Anything** that will trigger an idea or give you a
bit of help with your creative writing.
Keep adding to it and it will become more and more useful.
It doesn't have to be neat and tidy – the more full of ideas it is, the more useful it
will be so that's your main aim.

GOOD LUCK!