

LEARNING MEMOIR PROMPT

- ROUGH DRAFT 25 points DUE Thursday, Aug. 28
- FINAL DRAFT 50 points DUE Tuesday, Sept 9
- 750 words

WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

An essential tool in learning how to learn—not just writing, but any skill or about any topic—is *reflection*. For this project, **you're asked to reflect on your educational experience and the forces that have influenced how you learn.**

More specifically, you're asked to (1) consider a range of experiences, questions, characters, and environments that have shaped your perception of learning; (2) select some of the most salient elements to focus on; and (3) in 750 words, narrate the experience(s), then discuss the implications and conclusions you might draw upon reflection.

WHAT EXACTLY ARE THE GOALS HERE?

As will be the case with most of our assignments for this class, the overarching goal is to learn about how we learn; doing so will make us stronger writers. **ENG 1113 is designed to teach you how to learn to write.**

To begin the process, you're asked to **practice a form of focused reflection**. More precisely, the critical thinking maneuver we're practicing is *moving from observation to insight*.

Holistically, this project challenges you to:

- Use writing as a tool of inquiry
- Identify, describe, and reflect upon key elements of your learning histories
- Analyze your experiences for specific meanings—that is, move from observation to insight
- Grow a first-person style of reflective writing

WHY A LEARNING MEMOIR?

Although the genre of “memoir” is similar to a traditional autobiography—in that it's told from the author's perspective—the latter typically relays the entire arc of one's life. By contrast, the memoir focuses on a selection of specific, significant events.

You can think of this mini-memoir as having two parts. In the first, you're asked to narrate a story about an experience that has influenced how you learn. In other words, describe the scene and the people/characters, narrate what occurred and what was said, and draw the reader's attention to elements that you think are most significant.

In the second part, you're asked to explore the implications of this experience. That is, what lessons, values, or perspectives about learning were derived from that experience? Upon reflection, do you derive the same implications now? What conclusions do you draw from these implications? What insights about education and your perception of the learning process might you articulate?