

## **Autobiographical Narrative – “An Important Life Change”**

**On lined composition paper, using either pen or pencil, write a 400- to 700-word autobiographical narrative that describes in detail a life-changing event in accordance with the following outline:**

**Set-up:** 100 to 200 words that showcase the world BEFORE the event happens. Describe the setting and people in great, sensory detail:

It was a Wednesday in May. The rain, which was more of a drizzle, spotted my window and startled me awake. I jolted upright in my bed, glanced at the clock, which was still broken from last night’s fray with my younger and less intelligent but arguably more courageous brother Todd. I groped for my robe, which I accidentally put on inside out, slid into my bunny slippers and began the journey toward the kitchen – perhaps the last such journey in this particular house, as I was scheduled to move the rest of my things to my dad’s house later that day...

**Rising Action:** 100 to 300 words that outline a chain of events that becomes increasingly more dramatic:

Upon entering the kitchen, I was hit in the head with a sharp flying object the size of a pea. In fact, it was a pea. And there was Todd laughing and holding a pea shooter – the very pea shooter he got last Christmas from our Dad. It was a good thing I was moving to Dad’s and that Todd was staying here at Mom’s because if we were both moving to Dad’s there was no doubt in my mind that I would eventually have to kill him. He was getting on my very last nerve. In fact he was getting on all the nerves in the city and county of Los Angeles. In fact, if he isn’t careful, the entire county of LA will one day soon have him clandestinely rubbed out.

“Hey, Crap Face!” I yelled as if I were as young and ridiculous as Todd, “Grow a brain and then maybe a skull to house it and then maybe a neck to hold it. You’re a...”

“Oh, yeah? The hospital called. They found your brain.” Todd wasn’t very original. I had heard that joke a million times before. This was going to be a very long day.

As my dad was parallel parking the U-Haul out front and my mom and dog Snappy were strutting down the driveway to greet him – the dog much more amicably than my mom – it hit me that I was leaving this house and that things would never again be the same. I started to cry. Snappy must have sensed my sadness because she stopped running toward my dad and instead ran back toward me. She stopped dead at my feet, looked up at me with her hair-bedazzled terrier eyes. I swept her into my arms. She licked the salty tears from my cheek and I started to cry a lot harder. It hadn’t occurred to me until now that I would miss Snappy more than anything or anyone.

I felt a sharp tiny object hit me square in the back of the head. It was on. My brother was going to die...

**Climax:** 100 to 300 words that build to a crescendo. This is the height of the action, the big fight, the place where the protagonist wins and ultimately changes a bit.

**Denouement:** 100-200 words that tie up all the loose ends. This is the resolution where folks clean up after the big fight and all unsolved problems are solved or at least the situation becomes newly clear.