

APPENDIX D.

LABOR INSTRUCTIONS FOR DRAFTING YOUR PERSONAL NARRATIVE

Due by Wed, Sept. 26 at 11:00 a.m.

Canvas Post in forum: [wk 1 - narratives](#)

Slack channel: [#wk1-narratives](#)

Estimated labor time: 230 minutes total

These labor instructions will lead you through a process that develops your personal narrative, which you'll use to introduce yourself to the class and explain your personal writing goals for the quarter. While it is small, it is very important to your success in the class. Our syllabus explains this assignment as:

Personal Narrative (1): For the first day of class, you'll write a personal narrative that does two things. First, it introduces you to the class in your own words, and second, it discusses what your goals are for this course. This narrative should focus on details and specifics, showing us a kind of picture of you as a reader and writer or student, or as a language user. You decide how you wish to introduce yourself to us. Focus on these two questions: Who are you as a reader and writer, as a language user? What do you hope to accomplish in this course this quarter? This should be a short, 1-2 page (300-500 words) narrative only, posted on Canvas (in the "wk 1 - narratives" forum) by our first class session. As with all labor, there will be labor instructions for this work.

I assess all personal narratives the same. You may earn full credit (i.e., you've done the assignment according to its expectations), or no credit (i.e., you haven't met the expectations of the assignment or posted it on time)

PURPOSE AND GOALS

Our purpose for this labor is to introduce ourselves to our colleagues in class and consider the most important personal goals for this class that you would like to

accomplish. The goals for the following labor process are:

- To brainstorm and draft an introduction to our colleagues in class
- To draft a set of personal reading and writing goals that you can work toward during the quarter

DO NOT FORGET: Start your labor logs now! Please log all your labor sessions in your labor log on G'drive. This is required for every labor session of this class.

PROCESS

Please read completely the labor process below first, then follow each step carefully to get full credit for doing this assignment.

1. **Find a quiet spot** where you can do your work in peace and be completely in the present moment for yourself and your colleagues. Be mindful of places where there's too much background noise, even if you feel you're accustomed to it. You want to be able to do your work uninterrupted and in peace and quiet. This will allow you to focus better and do the work below more thoughtfully and mindfully.
2. **Read our [handout on Reading as a Mindful Practice](#)**, which explains not only how to read more deeply any text, but how to prepare to do that kind of work. Follow the instructions in that document as you read it. It will take you to other short texts. We'll use this practice in all our reading done this quarter. This will take about **20 minutes**.
3. Sit comfortably in your chair, rest your hands in your lap or to your sides, and close your eyes. Feel your body, your toes, your hands, your chest, your stomach. Then **do a mindful breathing practice** for 3 minutes. The key is to notice each breath and how it feels in your throat, or nose, or body. Just notice it without judging yourself. Breathe in and say in your mind, "in." Then breathe out and say in your mind "out." If your mind wonders, notice those thoughts. Do not judge yourself. Do not follow them or pursue them. Just observe them. It is normal for our minds to wander and be active. Just notice the wondering and gently bring your attention back to your breath. Use an [online meditation timer](#) to help you keep track of your time. Spend **3 minutes** in this mindful practice.
4. **Make a planning document for your personal narrative.** While you may make a plan, you can deviate from that plan when you actually begin drafting, but it's always good to have a plan when writing. To plan, I'd like you to do some brainstorming of ideas. Start by listing or writing

some ideas about some experiences that you've had with either reading or writing for school or outside of school, whichever seems most important for you to tell us about. You decide. Spend at least **20 minutes**, but take longer if you need it. It is the time in the activity that is most important, not what the planning document looks like or how detailed it is. Focus your attention on the following three lines of questioning when brainstorming or prewriting. **Be sure to have notes on three sets of questions** (you'll need them below).

- What experience with reading or writing have you had that seems typical, or important to you for some reason? What happened? How did you experience that labor of reading or writing? What are the main characteristics of the experience? Where and when did it happen? What does that experience tell you about yourself?
- What goals do you hope to accomplish in this course, a first-year writing course for UWT? Why these goals? Do any of them match our program's goals for class on [pages 1-2 of our syllabus](#)? What goals of yours seem particularly about you as a reader and/or writer? Why?
- What do you anticipate will be a challenge in this course in meeting your personal goals? Why will those challenges be challenges for you this quarter? What do you plan to do to overcome those challenges?

- 5. Pause for a few minutes to notice what you've done.** In order to be more mindful of what we are doing and learning in our class, I will ask us often to pause in our labors and post a Slack message (like a tweet). This will help you do your labor more mindfully by asking you to pause for a minute and pay attention to what you are doing and how you are feeling about it. This is how you can be more conscious of what and how you are learning stuff. And it makes you a better learner! So for this first time, **take a picture of your planning document and post that picture in Slack in the Channel [#wk1-narratives](#). With the picture, tell us how you are feeling about your narrative.** If you are doing this on a laptop or computer, to post, click on the “+” in the correct channel, then click “your computer,” and select the picture you took. You'll be prompted to add a message. If you are doing this in the Slack app on your phone, it's even easier. Tap the picture icon at the bottom of the screen in the appropriate channel. Don't forget to add a note about how you're feeling about your narrative. Make sure we can read clearly your planning document in the picture. This should take **1 minute**.

6. **Draft** your personal narrative using the planning document you just created. **Choose one reading or writing experience** to focus on. Tell us about it, then talk to us about how and why you feel it represents you as a reader or writer. Try to offer some questions that the experience and its details raises for you and your literacy(ies). What questions about language, literacy, or your literacy does this experience reveal to you? End your narrative with a separate, thoughtful paragraph about your goals for this class (TCORE 101). List your goals. **Try to have 4-5 real goals** (but you could have more), with some being about you as a reader and some about you as a writer. Drafting this narrative may take between **2-3 hours**, but it could take longer, and will be between **300-600 words** in length. The more time you spend, the more you will get from the labor. So give yourself time, and multiple sessions of drafting, if possible. Here are the two main parts of your narrative that are most important for us (and you) and make it complete:
- What reading or writing experience from your past exemplifies you as a reader or writer?
 - What are your own personal learning goals for this course (TCORE 101)? Why those? How do you plan on accomplishing them?
7. Now, before you finish your narrative, **go to its beginning and make a new, first paragraph**. This will be a short, maybe 1 or 2 sentence paragraph. These sentences will be your opening and greeting to us, and your chance to help us identify key aspects of your identity, and help us identify you in the right ways, ways you feel most comfortable with. Tell us how we can identify and reference you in class. For instance, what is your name? What gender and pronoun do you most identify with and use to reference yourself? What racial designation and ethnic group do you most find affinity with? Do you speak or use more than one language?
8. Keep in mind that ethnicity and race are not the same thing, but they often correlate. Think of ethnicity as the culture you identify with, like Irish or Chinese, while race is a much broader term that tends to signal other things in U.S. culture, which we'll talk about. Racial designations come in about 4-5 categories: Black, white, Asian, Pacific Islander/Polynesian, Latinx, and Native/Indigenous Peoples. If you identify as a mixed-race person, then you may tell us that too. Here's an example of this welcoming set of sentences, using my identifying information:

Hello, my name is Asao B. Inoue. I am a cisgendered Asian male, who prefers the pronouns "he/him." My father was Japanese from Hawaii and my mom is combination of

Greek, Scottish, and English, as best our family can say. I was raised speaking only English in my household.

9. Please understand that this part of your narrative is not meant to out anyone or cause undue emotional trauma. It is meant to help us be clear and explicit about who we are and how we'd like others to know us.
10. Finally, **give your narrative a title**, something that matches the center of the narrative. What short, snappy title can you give this narrative that encapsulates what you want us to know about you as a colleague and perhaps what you hope to accomplish in the course? While the title may come to you quickly, give yourself at least **1-2 minutes** to make a good one. Make sure to use the title in your Canvas posting.
11. **Post** your personal narrative in the discussion forum on Canvas, [wk 1 - narratives](#). Post it by Wed, Sep 26 at 11:00 am. We will read these out loud on the first day of class to introduce ourselves to each other. I'll do one too.