**Student Memoir Visual Portfolio**

**The Written Assignment**

For this assignment you will write a memoir of your own. Like Murray’s essay, your piece will relate to a particular photograph in which you appear. The text you fashion needs to be purposeful and lead your reader somewhere.

Reflect upon the photo then write. Use details, memories, perceptions, and ideas that can be gathered up then *purposefully* arranged. Where does your photo take you? Reach beyond an image’s edge toward other memories, details, sensations, situations, and moments that have left traces in your head and your heart.

*As you plan, write and revise:*

* Keep message and purpose in mind. What do you want the reader to get out of reading your piece? What do you leave in? What do you take out? What are your selection of details?
* Get the words right; diction matters. Choose words that will make a difference as you shape your piece.
* Be particularly mindful of how your piece opens and concludes. What kinds of choice have you made in connection with those portions of your essay*.*

Please consult the scoring guide below this assignment and due dates during your work

**The Premise**

Through memoir, writers represent and make sense of selected life experiences, also known as selection of details. Consider this excerpt from Annie Dillard’s introduction to Modern American Memoirs:

*Memoirs offer a powerfully fixed point of view. From a picket in the past, the retrospective narrator may range intimately or intellectually across a wide circle of characters and events. The memoirist may analyze ideas or present dramatic scenes; the memoirist may confess, eulogize, reflect, inform, and persuade. By convention memoirists tell true stories about actual people. Their tones may be confiding, scholarly, hilarious, or all of these…*

The “picket” in your past is not staked as far down life’s road as Don Murray’s, Annie Dillard’s or me. However, you *do* enjoy the perspective of a person who stands at the boundary of adulthood, one whose childhood, however “wonderful and terrible” it might have been is receding. You have earned a perspective. Now write about it.

**The Product**

Memoir #1 rough draft due Day 5

Memoir #2 rough draft due Day 5

Memoir #3 rough draft due Day 5

**Final Portfolio due Day 5**

On each date above you must bring two hard copies of your memoir to class for peer editing. All due dates must be adhere to or you will earn point deductions on your final portfolio.

I will conference with six students during each peer edit session. Students will be chosen at random. **If you do not have a copy for our conference you will lose your conference.**

The final portfolio must be submitted in a two-pocket folder and will include the final copy of all **three essays** with **all rough drafts** and **peer edits**

**I will choose one essay from your portfolio at random to grade.**

Each essay must have a peer edit from a **peer in AP English Language.**

If your portfolio is missing an essay you will be deducted 33 points.

If your portfolio is missing a peer edit you will be deducted 17 points.

If you are absent during any of the peer edits you must find your own editor.

**Student Visual Memoir Portfolio Scoring Guide**

**Rhetorical Purpose**

4 The piece is clearly purposeful, featuring insightful (perhaps even profound) observations and thoughtful commentary.

3 The piece is consistently purposeful; meaningful observations and comments are evident.

2 The piece’s purpose is hard to discern; memories may be simply collected and described without sufficient effort to make sense of them.

1 The piece’s purpose fails to emerge; events or circumstances may merely be recounted without any attention to their importance.

**Substance & Strategy**

4 The piece is carefully fashioned, drawing on memory, sharing anecdotes and reflecting in order to convey a deep appreciation of the meaning of experience.

3 Not just anecdotal, the piece is developed and conveys an appreciation of the meaning of experience.

2 The piece shares memories and anecdotes, but does not sufficiently connect them with an appreciation of the meaning behind experience. Development may be lacking.

1 The piece is unacceptably brief and undeveloped.

**Diction & Details**

4 Superior word choice is evident; details, imagery, description, and narration help create a powerful commentary and portrait.

3 Effective word choice is evident; specific and effective concrete details, imagery, description, and narration sufficiently convey a view of the author.

2 Words are chosen with insufficient attention to their effect; the piece’s details, imagery, description, and narration

inadequately convey a view of the author.

1 Words are carelessly chosen; the piece’s details, imagery, description, and narration are shallow and fail to generate a view of the author.

**Lead & Conclusion**

4 The opening engages the reader, suggests and connects with the piece’s subject and occasion, and establishes a clear direction. The conclusion accents or embellishes the purpose of the piece.

3 The opening brings the reader into the piece, provides some sense of the piece’s subject and/or occasion, and sets the piece off in a direction. The conclusion aptly punctuates the piece.

2 The piece opens without establishing much direction / focus, or hinting at content / subject / significance. The conclusion seems largely unrelated to the piece as a whole.

1 The piece opens without detail, direction, or focus. The piece merely stops.

**Writing Process**

4 Abundant evidence of steady, high quality work exists in the form of preliminary drafts; purposeful conferences were held.

3 Solid evidence of steady work exists in the form of preliminary drafts; preparation for writing conferences was evident.

2 Preliminary drafts and efforts to revise may have been half-hearted or incomplete; preparation for writing conferences may have been lacking.

1 Preliminary drafts have been sketchy or simply not produced. Student failed to prepare for writing conferences. The piece shows little if any attention to performance demands.

**Correctness**

4 Any errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage are rare and insignificant.

3 Errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage are few and do not distract the reader or detract from the piece.

2 While errors in correctness do not interfere with overall sense of the piece, they are frequent enough to distract the reader.

1 Errors are so severe that they interfere with clarity and sense.

OVERALL GRADE:

This assignment courtesy of C. Brassil’s AP Summer Institute, 2011.