

First and Last Name
ENG 098
Assignment #1

Assignment #1: Hiraeth Narrative

Prompt: Do you have a homesickness/longing for a home to which you cannot return, a home which maybe never was? In Welch culture, this is known as *hiraeth*. What scene or scenes can you compose to illustrate both a connection in the past and a disconnection now (because you cannot return)? Your home can be a physical/material reality (bedroom, old house, football field, Manhattan) or a spiritual/mental/nonmaterial reality (a moment of bliss, a first kiss). The story must be about you and about a time from your life. If you choose to create a project about a “home that never existed,” I ask that the story stem from a real life home, person, or event.

Final Draft will be shared with docmangini@gmail.com added as a collaborator.

Purpose: Please choose your primary purpose and consider if you have a secondary and tertiary purpose. Here are your three main choices: Persuade, Inform, Entertain.

Audience: Your primary audience is your instructor and classmates.

Style: This is a narrative so please blend both descriptive (showing) and expository (telling) writing. Feel free to include dialogue, poetry, video, and audio. Please use the tone that is most appropriate for your purpose and audience. MOST of this story should be illustrating a scene or two or three from *one single event* from your life. SHOW the reader what happened. Here is a good test: you should be able to draw your scenes as if they were comic strip. If you cannot find enough description in your writing to create a visual scene, you are not SHOWING the reader your scene; rather, you are TELLING them about what happened. As a ratio, think about 80% showing writing (description and action in scenes) and 20% telling. Just to give you an idea. If you choose to compose a multimodal project, you will use various print and visual texts to show your home to an audience.

Focus: Through a series of scenes you should use narrative writing to show your own experience. Please focus on one particular event or story. Do not try to write about three different experiences from your life—because you will not have the space in this assignment to fully develop your ideas.

Structure: Please consider the context, text and subtext of your story:

- *Context:* Your story should include a setting and situated information that frames the plot. To create context, your story should provide the 5 Ws: Who, What, When, Where, and Why.
- *Text:* You choose if your story is shared in first person, past or present, humorous or sad, etc. Otherwise, I ask that your story opens with a showing scene that includes description and action. Then you can add sections of telling to provide context and reflection. Remember Lee Gutkind points out that showing scenes are the building blocks of a creative nonfiction narrative.
- *Subtext:* Your story is not much of a story if it does not include subtext (what I like to consider as “what’s left unsaid and under the surface of the text”). To create subtext, please consider **themes** (homesickness for a home to which you cannot return is one major theme—but I urge you to create other themes) and **conflict** (person vs person, person vs oneself, person vs environment, person vs nature, etc.). Your story must have conflict!

Thesis: Your thesis statement can be implied or stated—either option should communicate the focus of your essay.

Process: To begin, *Think On Paper* about the issues surrounding your decision: freewrite, list, cluster, discuss, and read other creative nonfiction stories to generate ideas. Then, please consider answering one of the

following questions in your own creative nonfiction narrative (if you have another idea for a question and topic, please email me first):

- What scenes from your childhood evoke positive feelings for you?
- What people from your past – people you cannot interact with anymore – have had the most positive impact on your life?
- What metaphorical places from your past would you like to return? An ex-boyfriend’s hug? Sunday mornings with your grandmother?
- What belief system, if any, disconnected you from your home? Has this belief system alienated you with others?
- What social system (family, religion, education, media, economic class, law, government) created the biggest connection or disconnection from your home? What specific event from your life best illustrates this connection or lack of connection? In retrospect, did this social system help or hinder your life?
- Which conversations, dreams, accidents, hobbies, (moments) etc. might you use to jumpstart a story?

Product: This narrative must be around 750 words and formatted as follows: 12-point font, double-spacing. Please include an original title centered at the top of the essay. This doesn’t count as an original title: *Creative Nonfiction Essay*. We will use these criteria to evaluate your essay:

- _____ Your story is well organized, descriptive, and analytical.
- _____ Your story has a clear time frame (this story should take place over a short period of time).
- _____ Your story has a clear structure (showing and telling scenes are well-integrated and cohesive).
- _____ Your writing is appropriate and compelling for your audience (tone, style, diction).
- _____ Your story includes reflective “telling” moments located between the showing scenes.
- _____ Your story is around 750 words.
- _____ Your story shows signs of careful proofreading, with minimal grammatical or spelling errors.