**Random Autobiography**

To kick off our Personal Narrative Unit, you will tell your life story in the form of a random autobiography. Try to include details from all parts of your life. You don’t have to go in order either (hence “random”). Think about the good stuff, the bad stuff, the funny, crazy, silly, strange, or fun stuff. Do NOT go into too many details about any one story. Instead, we should be left wondering about the rest of the details! In the end, your Random Autobiography should look sort of like a poem, with each new fact about you starting on a new line.

Your final piece should include at least 10 starters (Note: You don’t have to use the ones that I’ve given you below) and be on a separate sheet of paper, typed. The format can vary though (see the sample on the other side). **You only have to put your full name centered at the top of the page.**

**Here are a few starters or ideas to help you get started (Remember, you don’t have to use them):**

Before I was born…

I was born… (describe the day)

I was born to…. (describe your parents)

The day I was born…

When I was a baby…

My first word was…

My parent(s) said I used to…

When I was really little…

I remember…

I’ve played (with)…

I’ve walked…

I’ve ridden…

I’ve learned…

I’ve traveled to (or visited)…

I’ve cried…

I’ve laughed…

I’ve made…

I’ve worn…

I’ve learned…

I want to be…

I hope….

I will…

**Due date for the final version: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Late assignments will lose -10% the first day late, -20% the second day late, and receive a zero the third day late.**

**Random**

**Autobiography--**

**EXAMPLE**

I was the expected

Valentine

that arrived

before I learned early

that red socks

are warmest.

I’ve held a tarantula

in my hand

and felt the chill,

the tiny hairs.

Panned for gold

at Garnet, Montana,

a ghost town.

No, luck.

I’ve hear thunder

in the depth

of a snowstorm.

I lost my

first love

and my pet

canary, Pierre,

all in one day.

I’ve held

a stunned finch

in my hand,

regaining his senses

after flying into

the front window.

A girl,

Natalie,

hated me

for no reason

all through high

school.

My friends

lost brothers

in Viet Nam.

My guardian angel

used to live

across the way,

apartment 305,

really red hair,

a potter,

a teacher.

I’ve had some

excellent teachers.

I tell you sincerely;

Gary, Indiana

is an eyesore

from a charter bus.

And I have

been cruel,

cutting off heads

and feet

with my Instamatic.

I saw Kennedy shot.

I saw Kennedy shot

over and over

on TV,

in the classroom

in the third grade.

I’m still innocent,

though.

I once screamed at

my boss

in anger,

and have been

falling-down drunk

on Irish Mist.

I once kissed

an anarchist.

I once suffered

pneumonia.

And only once

ate a whole

raw onion

on a dare.

Twice, I lost

my baby bracelet,

dainty gold chain,

miniature pearls and

little heart of gold.

And twice

I’ve driven through

Gilroy, California,

the garlic capitol

of the world.

We hopscotched

until chalk lines

scuffed and faded.

I have landed

more big fish

than most men

can say

got away.

I rolled a Pinto,

Walked away

unharmed;

Count that

one miracle.

I’ve melted

maple sugar candy

on my tongue

and warmed myself

at morning campfires

on many

mountainsides.

Once I talked

briefly with

Dennis Banks

on campus

at the U,

I think.

I bought a house

when I was

a single girl

and I’ve often

lost mittens.

He found me;

the husband

I wasn’t looking for.

Together

we passed through

the Manitou,

the spirit

that roams

the waters of

White Bear Lake

after dark.

Not fog.

Not mist.

More tactile.

I will testify

to Legend

based on Truth.

I’ve been scared

by bears

in the basement.

I have stored

small treasures

in a cigar box,

and flown

kites in April.

The smell of

Coppertone

brings back

Monterey’s sandy

beach,

and I long

to see Alberta’s

Rockies again.

I’ve felt the

slow, dizzying spin

of a car on ice,

known deaf

frustration,

seen blackbirds

gather.

Just a toddler,

I toddled

toward a cliff

but was saved by

ruffled panties

that Dad grabbed.

Aurora Borealis

has played for me

more often than

I deserve.

I have shopped

at K Mart.

My silver baby cup

is all banged up.

I am

licensed to practice.

Mary Ann Larson

## Random Autobiography by a teacher in Ireland

August 18, 2010 by [irishgwen](http://irishgwen.wordpress.com/author/irishgwen/)

I nearly died twice  
Bruno is the best dog in the world  
My favorite Christmas was when we wrapped all our presents  
in brown paper bags  
I crochet beanies for the wrestling team  
People in Ireland really do give bad directions  
I don’t like the taste of alcohol  
I’ve pulled off the road countless times  
to write down the poem I can’t keep in my head

I was hit by a car when I was a freshman  
I’ve tried every hair color except black  
If I had my way, I’d teach until I was at least 95  
Lake Nacimiento is my favorite place on earth.  
I wish Bruno liked to swim  
Singing Amazing Grace makes me cry every time  
I love the sound of bagpipes  
and the smell of fresh produce and corn tortillas

My cat will be 18 years old this September  
Two years ago, I sported red and white liberty spikes  
for the big game  
Someday soon, I’ll get my first tattoo  
I ate beef tongue. Just once.

On Halloween, I will be in Vietnam at my brother’s fake wedding  
I was an Irish dancer, and I have my black belt.  
I am totally deaf in my right ear.  
I hate flying in helicopters without doors.  
I was not in love with my first boyfriend

I usually lose my voice at football games  
My car is often referred to as the Party Car  
Lady Liberty is breathtaking in person,  
and the view from the crown is worth the climb  
I am deathly afraid of snakes,  
and not a big fan of pigs  
I once got up at 3 in the morning  
to drive a friend home from a party

I believe that music is poetry,  
even and especially Eminem  
It’s a fact that no dog beats a Costco dog  
If the music is good, I’ll be out there dancing  
and for a white girl, I’ve got rhythm  
I am who I am, He said, and I believe

I’ve visited 10 of the 50 states. So far.  
I love that my eyes change color depending on  
what I’m wearing  
My favorite family member is my great-aunt Patty  
I once shaved my head at the Relay For Life.  
Some people still remember me bald.

—Gwen Harrod 8/17/10

**Random Autobiography**

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| --- |
| I was a firecracker baby who came a day late.  I used to make my family sit on the couch while I performed.  I knew I loved my husband after our first date. I was surprised.  I lived in a trailer on top of Black Mesa (with no running water and no electricity) when I taught Navajo children and parents to read and write.  I was a guest at a Squaw Dance and watched a Medicine Man cleanse the spirit of a returning Vietnam vet.  Once I drove with my husband in a VW bug from Illinois to California without stopping to sleep.  It takes about 36 hours if you’re counting.  I have seen Bald Eagles glide along the still morning surface of the Mississippi River and catch fish with precision and grace.  Sometimes I add things I’ve done to my to-do list just so I can have something to cross off.  I have heard the night music of a cicada infestation that happens every 200 years; they only play in fortissimo.  I stole my sister’s Easter hat and wore it in my kindergarten school picture. My mother was surprised.  I delivered my daughter at home—standing up, supported by my husband and a friend—gravity was our silent partner. The midwife caught her.  I have been awed by nature’s light shows that happen in Midwestern summer thunderstorms.  I have frantically filled sandbags with my neighbors, racing to keep the rising Mississippi from further flooding our village. The river eventually won.  I have learned how to laugh uncontrollably without making a sound in church.  And I remember how it felt the day after my husband passed on when I had to go on without him—ready or not.  By Randi Browning  August 2008 |