

Rewriting an Essay of Personal Experience

Most of writing is rewriting. When rewriting your personal essay, here is a checklist of what to review to improve your rough draft. I have separated these into groups. Focus on the first group on your first rewrite of the essay, the second group on the second rewrite, the third group on your third rewriting, and the last group when writing your final draft.



Review 1 (Description)

Descriptions of people include (need not be all, but strive for at least three):

- _____ Physical appearance
- _____ Mannerisms
- _____ How they move
- _____ How they speak
- _____ Facial expressions
- _____ Personality

Descriptions of places include (need not be all, but strive for at least three):

- _____ Sights
- _____ Sounds
- _____ Smells
- _____ Touch
- _____ Taste

- _____ Descriptions of more important people and things are more detailed than important ones.

Review 2 (Dialogue)

- _____ If not already present, look for a good place to include dialogue or monologue.
- _____ The dialogue is correctly punctuated.
- _____ The dialogue is correctly formatted.
- _____ Capitalization in the dialogue is correct.

Review 3 (Internal details)

- _____ You include your thoughts about key events.
- _____ You include your feelings about key events.
- _____ There is a good balance of narration (story-telling), description, dialogue, and reflection.

Review 4 (Final draft)

- _____ The paper is titled.
- _____ All capitalization is correct.
- _____ All punctuation is correct.
- _____ Any other grammar rules you know are followed correctly.