

Short Short Autobiography

eng 2010 / autumn 2017 / ohio university / chang

According to M. H. Abrams, autobiography is “a biography written by the subject about himself or herself” in which the text attempts “to set forth character, temperament, and milieu, as well as the subject’s activities and experiences” (22). For this exercise, you will think about a moment in your life—a scene, a single event, action, or experience—to generate a short autobiography. In particular, consider a moment or experience that revealed to you something about your own self, your own body, or the ways the world around you sees and understands your body. You could write about playing a sport or singing karaoke, you could write about breaking a bone or getting a tattoo, you could write about getting into a fight or being teased on the playground, you could write about taking a class picture or marching in a protest. Whatever you chose, make it specific, simple, and memorable. This autobiography also asks you to reveal something about **who you are**, **what is important to you**, and **what is important about the story you are telling**. Be inspired by Maya Angelou’s *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and the skills and strategies of fiction and nonfiction, autobiography and memoir, story and truth that she uses. You have up to 500 words (only) to develop setting, personality, plot, and purpose.

Guidelines and Due Dates

Format: Semi-formal paper, 1-2 pages, up to 500 words, typed, no title page, 1” margins, doubled-spaced body, proper name block & title, single-sided print

Due: Tuesday, September 19, hardcopy, at the start of class

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