

# The Narrative Essay

## Setting

Identify *who* is involved, *where* the story takes place, and *when* the story takes place

Lead up to the moment when things change

Beginning

Transition

Thesis statement: A forecasting statement that indicates what changes as a result of this experience or why this experience is important (significance, importance, relevance or value).

## Story

Things happen that result in a change

Begin at the moment that things begin to change.

For instance, if the essay is about an exciting trip to Disney World, the *story* begins at Disney World. The events leading up to that are part of the setting.

Be careful of oversimplifying the time of the story.

Look for overuse of simple transitions like *and*, *then*, *and then*, *first*, *second*, *third*, *finally* and replace them with more appropriate transitions like *as*, *while*, *since*, *because*, *although*, *during*, *after*.

Focus on details rather than on explanation.

*Show* what happened rather than *explain* what happened.

Be careful of inappropriate shifts in tense.

If the story is being told in past tense, do not suddenly shift to present tense.

Middle

Transition

Sentence that concludes story; final scene at end of story

## Significance/Importance/Value of change is explored/explained

If the conclusion is immediate (explanation comes immediately in time after the event), the essay may not be resolved but may close with a dilemma.

If the conclusion is distant (explanation comes some time after the event), the essay may come to terms with the change.

End