

My Story – Teacher Version

Grade level: 8 or 9

Suggested Duration: 1 or 2 hours or class periods (personal essay could also be assigned as homework, in which case 1 hour or class period)

Target Audience: Students in ELA classes (middle and/or high school)

§110.20. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 8

(15) Writing/Literary Texts. Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas. Students are expected to:

(A) write an imaginative story that:

- (i) sustains reader interest;
- (ii) includes well-paced action and an engaging story line;
- (iii) creates a specific, believable setting through the use of sensory

details;

- (iv) develops interesting characters; and
- (v) uses a range of literary strategies and devices to enhance the style

and tone

§110.31. High School English I

(15) Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts. Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Students are expected to:

(A) write an analytical essay of sufficient length that includes:

- (i) effective introductory and concluding paragraphs and a variety of
- (ii) rhetorical devices, and transitions between paragraphs;
- (iii) a controlling idea or thesis;
- (iv) an organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience, and

sentence

context; and

- (v) relevant information and valid inferences.

Teacher

Student

<p>Teacher begins the activity by asking students what they think were the most important elements of Angelica’s story.</p>	<p>Responses will vary, but could include how hard she had to work while in school and how she learned what kind of work was not what she wanted her career path to be.</p>
<p>Teacher continues the discussion by asking students</p>	<p>Again, responses will vary</p>

<p>whether their own stories are similar to Angelica’s and suggesting that they take a few notes. This then becomes a pre-writing activity. Prompts could include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ever had to work outside the home at something you thought was boring or hard? • Did you complete the work or task? • How did you feel once you had completed the task? • What did you learn from the experience? • Are there things at school you feel are more challenging than others? • What are you doing to be successful at them? 	<p>according to experiences. Students share, take notes.</p>
<p>Teacher introduces the essay portion of the activity: Each of us has a personal story. Angelica has shared hers in the video you saw. It’s a story of hardship, true, but it’s also a story about overcoming your problems or obstacles and seeing opportunities rather than roadblocks. These are the kinds of stories that many college admissions officers believe distinguishes potentially successful candidate from others. You may be asked to discuss these experiences in a pre-admissions essay.</p>	

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For this assignment, you have seen the video segment on Angelica. Please think more about your personal journey so far. Write a brief (400 words) account of your story, with any difficulties or opportunities you have had along the way that you might want to share with a college admissions officer. This will be an opportunity for you to show that you will be ready for the new challenges of college life. Some ideas might be:

- A time you were successful at something you did not think you could do
- A time you experienced hardship in your personal or family life, but did not let it get you down
- A time when you realized you wanted to be successful at something that no one in your family has ever done
- A time when you finally succeeded at something after many tries
- Something you are really proud of doing

Responses will vary, but should include an expression of personal details appropriate to a personal statement provided to a college admissions team—a first draft, so to speak. A recent article in *The New York Times* Education Life supplement sampled eight colleges and identified the required length of the essays they ask for as being between 300 and 450 words per essay, so length may be adjusted depending on grade level.

Emphasis should be placed on the idea that perceived difficulties are also opportunities to display grit and persistence in pursuit of the goal—college.

My Story - Student Version

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