**Narrative Writing**

Narrative writing tells *what* and *where* something happened, *who* was involved, and *how* and *why* it took place. It recounts an event and it tells a story. New reporters, historians, and biographers all recreate stories from others’ experiences.

Narrative essays are sometimes indistinguishable from the short story in terms of technique. However, a narrative essayist recreates actual experience by rendering real events (**non-fiction**) into words; the writer carefully selects details relevant to the essay’s purpose and audience. In contrast, short-story writers and novelists create from their imaginations a world of characters that act out experiences and ideas for the reader. The experiences in these stories might resemble actual events, but the work is **fiction**.

**Checklist for effective Narrative Writing**

* Organize events into a beginning, middle, and end.
* Use **temporal reference points** (on Sunday, before church) **and transitional words** (first, then, next) to create a sense of the flow of events over time.
* Use vivid verbs and concise sentences to create an impression of action.
* Use adjectives to create images that accurately describe people and settings.
* Allow the reader to figure out the meaning of the story: imply rather than state it directly.