**Characteristics of Memoirs/Personal Narrative**

* A memory; a description of an event from the past
* Written in the first person “I”, “we”; told from one person’s point of view
* Based on the truth
* Reveals the feelings of the writer
* Has meaning; shows what the author learned from the experience
* Focused on one event; about one point in the author’s life
* About the author’s experience more than about the event itself

**Introduction:**

The introduction paragraph should include a "hook" -- something that draws the reader in and convinces her to read the rest of the memoir. The hook can be a shocking statement, a question or teaser about the main topic of the memoir.

**Body:**

Students will need to select sub-topics for each of the three middle paragraphs. For example, if the student is writing about a [family vacation](http://www.ehow.com/info_8689452_teaching-kids-write-memoirs.html), one paragraph can be about the trip to the vacation spot, one can be about what the family did while on vacation and one can be about the trip home. Or the same family vacation topic can include paragraphs about three different adventures the family had while on vacation. Encourage students to explore different ways to organize their memoir. This helps them focus their topic and make the memoir more interesting.

**Ending/Conclusion**

BEFORE:

So that is the end of the story about my big baseball victory.

AFTER:

I’ll never forget the crack of the bat as I hit that homerun and the way my heart pounded as the ball flew out of the park. I hope we’ll be just as lucky at our next game, too! You can be sure I’ll be practicing extra hard for the play-offs next week!