

Personal Narrative Unit
English 9A, Alexander

Moving Beyond Expression

"I like to think that the more our students write reflectively in school, the more equipped they will become to overcome the superficiality that awaits them in life beyond school." -Kelly Gallagher

As of now, you should have several personal narrative drafts in the "Writing" section of your Writer's Notebook. More than likely, these drafts are more expressive than reflective, and I would like to push you beyond simply recounting the past.

Today's Directions

- First, read the following definitions, keeping in mind that the best writing is a mix of the two:
 - **Expressive Writing:** *The writer shares thoughts, ideas, feelings, and questions about his or her experiences. Usually written in first-person point of view, it exhibits the author's voice. The author tells the reader how he or she feels.*
 - **Reflective Writing:** *Though also personal, it moves the writer into an exploration of how a particular experience has shaped the writer. The goal is not to share final thoughts on a topic; on the contrary, it is a vehicle for exploring and discovering new thoughts. In reflective writing, the author often looks at the past as a means for looking at the future.*

- Second, open your Writer's Notebook and select one personal narrative draft that you would like to spend more time on. Spend the next 15 to 20 minutes answering the following reflection questions on the left side, next to your chosen narrative (title the left side, "So What?"):
 - What did I learn from this experience?
 - How did this experience change me?
 - How do I behave/think differently now as a result of that experience?

- Finally, switch Writer's Notebooks with a partner. Read your partner's personal narrative and their answers to the reflection questions. Offer both written and verbal advice as to how they could incorporate their answers to yield a more reflective piece of writing.