

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## A Memory Paragraph

*In this activity you will write a paragraph describing a school memory. It could be exciting, funny, scary, or surprising, but it must be true.*



1. Start by brainstorming some school memories on the following lines. Try to write at least five different ideas. Then circle the one you want to write about.

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2. What makes a good paragraph?

Writers often organize good paragraphs using a common set of guidelines. First, writers include a topic sentence to introduce the topic or central idea of the paragraph. The topic sentence tells what the paragraph will be about. Next, writers include supporting sentences to explain the topic or central idea. Writers usually include at least three to five sentences to give the reader supporting details and facts about the topic or central idea. Including interesting facts and details helps make the paragraph informative and interesting to read. It is important that the sentences stick to the topic. Finally, writers end the paragraph with a concluding sentence, or their final thought about the topic or central idea. Using these guidelines can be helpful to writing a clear and informative paragraph.

3. Write a paragraph that includes:

A. Topic Sentence: Start with a sentence introducing the memory.

B. Supporting Sentences: Describe what happened, how you felt, how people reacted, and any other interesting details you remember.

C. Concluding Sentence: End your paragraph by explaining why the memory is important.

*Do your best with spelling and punctuation—it is OK if you need to guess. This is a rough draft, and the most important thing is to write an interesting, true story.*

## Parts of a Paragraph

**Topic Sentence** - introduce the memory

**Supporting Sentence** - describe what happened, how you felt, how people reacted, and other details

**Concluding Sentence** - explain why the memory is important

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### A Memory Paragraph

The craziest thing that ever happened to me at school was when

First

Then

Finally

I felt            when this happened.

[illegible]

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## Defining *Personal Narratives*

Write the definition of *personal narrative* in the space below.

A personal narrative is a true story told in 1st person by someone who was involved  
in the events being described.

List three things that make an essay a personal narrative:

1. a true story
2. told in the 1st person
3. by someone involved in the events



## Reading Six-Word Memories

The “six-word memory” challenges writers to share a true story, just like your paragraph from Activity 1.1, but using very few words. With only six words, narrators must be very careful to pick words that do a lot of work.

*Read the first two memories and discuss them with your class and teacher.*

*Then read the remaining memories. List all the details you can figure out or infer from the six words the author has chosen. Be careful only to include inferences you can support with the text. Consider: where and when does the story take place? How does the narrator feel? Explain how you figured it out.*

1. Snow angels, loving family, hot chocolate.



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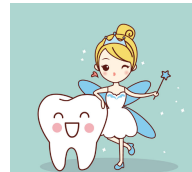
2. Snow falling, teeth chattering, keep warm.



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3. Swallowed tooth, morning, dollar on stomach.



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4. High swings, chain slacks, bloodied knees.



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5. Wheels spin, pedals slip, hello gravel.



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6. Each year, more pie, happy holiday.



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7. Moon, lake, camp friends sharing secrets.



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8. Award ceremony, winter boots, shame, shame.



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9. My dog, tunneling through snow mountains.



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## Writing Six-Word Memories

*Flip back to Activity Page 1.1 and circle the most important words in the paragraph. When choosing your words, think about what is most important in the memory. Also think about what words are most specific, or create the most immediate and interesting picture in your head. There may be a few more than six, but no more than ten. Write them below:*

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*Now choose the six words from that list that can make a six-word memory that makes sense.*

Six-word memory:

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1. What facts, events, and details did you include from your longer paragraph?

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2. Why did you choose to include these facts, events, and details?

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3. What did you leave out? Why did you choose to leave it out?

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4. What do you think a reader will be able to infer from your six-word memory?

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

2.1

ACTIVITY PAGE

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## “A Good Lie” Questions

*Discuss questions 1–3 with your teacher and class. Write down the class’s answers below. Afterwards, finish reading “A Good Lie” and answer questions 4 and 5.*

1. What is the narrator’s main point in the first paragraph of “A Good Lie”? You may use your own words to describe the main point, or you may locate the topic sentence in the paragraph that describes the central idea.

It is not usually a good idea to \_\_\_\_\_.

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2. What words, phrases, or examples from the text helped you answer question 1? These phrases and examples are the evidence that supports the central idea.

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3. Based on the first paragraph, what do you think the rest of the essay’s main point will be?

I think the essay will be about \_\_\_\_\_.

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4. Now that you have read the whole essay, what do you think is the main point of “A Good Lie”?

Showing care for others is what \_\_\_\_\_ do.

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5. What words, phrases, or examples from the text helped you answer question 4? Remember, these phrases and examples are the evidence that supports the central idea.

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DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## Character Traits in “A Good Lie”

*In the left-hand column of the chart below, list four character traits that describe Lily. They may be traits listed by the class, or new traits that you have identified, but they must be supported by evidence in the text.*

*In the right hand column record that evidence.*

Character Trait	Evidence from Text
kind	Lily does not want her friend to feel bad about wetting the bed so she pretends _____.
leader	When Lily _____ the other girls laugh also, so nobody questioned her story.
dishonest	Lily tells everyone she _____ even though we know she did not.
smart	She figures out if she acts like _____ is not a big deal, then the others girls will act like it is not a big deal also.



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## Rules for Group Discussion

- One student speaks at a time.
- Allow everyone a chance to share their opinions.
- Be respectful of others' opinions.
- Stay on task.



*Take turns sharing a story about a time when someone else was a good friend to you, including what happened and how you felt. While one group member talks, the other group members should listen closely and record character traits the friend showed and a description of how the speaker felt.*

*The first two lines have been filled out as an example, as if the narrator of “A Good Lie” had told her story to your group.*

*Repeat until each group member has had a chance to share a story.*

Trait	Evidence	Makes Friends Feel
<i>brave</i>	<i>Tells other girls she wet the bed.</i>	<i>safe</i>
<i>funny</i>	<i>Laughs and makes a silly face.</i>	<i>happy</i>

Trait	Evidence	Makes Friends Feel



## “A Good Friend” Paragraph

### What makes a great friend?

You have selected the most important character trait in a good friend. Now write a paragraph explaining why you chose it. Provide a real-life example of friends showing this trait. Explain how having a friend with this trait makes you feel and why you think it is the most important trait.

Remember the sections of a good paragraph from Activity Page 1.1. Your paragraph should include:

1. A topic sentence that introduces the most important character trait in a good friend.
2. Supporting sentences that describe examples of friends showing this trait.
3. A concluding sentence summing up why you think it is the most important character trait for a good friend.





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## 2.4

CONTINUED

ACTIVITY PAGE

## “A Good Friend” Paragraph

A good friend should be \_\_\_\_\_.

My friend showed \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_.

Having friends who are \_\_\_\_\_ makes me feel \_\_\_\_\_.

[illegible]

Reading for Cause and Effect

With your partner, reread Chapter 1 of *Extraordinary, Ordinary People: A Memoir of Family* and write down all the examples of cause and effect you see in the passage.

Cause	Effect
Mother wants a unique and musical name.	
	Father becomes a feminist.



Brainstorming

*Condoleezza Rice’s birth made her father a feminist who believed that his daughter could do anything. Using cause and effect structure, you will write a paragraph describing how someone changed you or how you changed someone else.*

*Begin by brainstorming experiences you might write about. List them in the chart below.*

Person	Change







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## Writing about Cause and Effect

*Choose one of the experiences from Activity Page 3.2 and draft a paragraph describing the person who changed you and how they did it (or who you changed and how you did it).*

Begin by jotting down some notes to help organize your writing:

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Cause (what the first person did):

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Effect (how the second person changed):

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What happened:

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