

WRITING YOUR MEMOIR

It's the stuff of every day life.



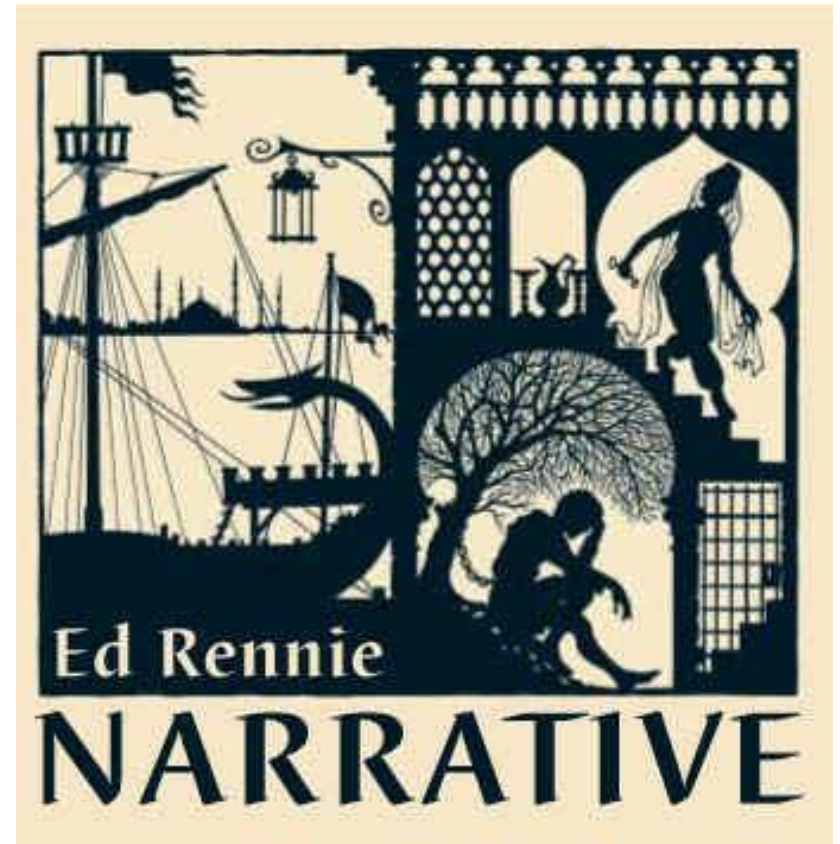
You, me, he, she, we...

*"In order to write memoir,
we need to see that literature is made out of
the everyday stuff of our lives."*

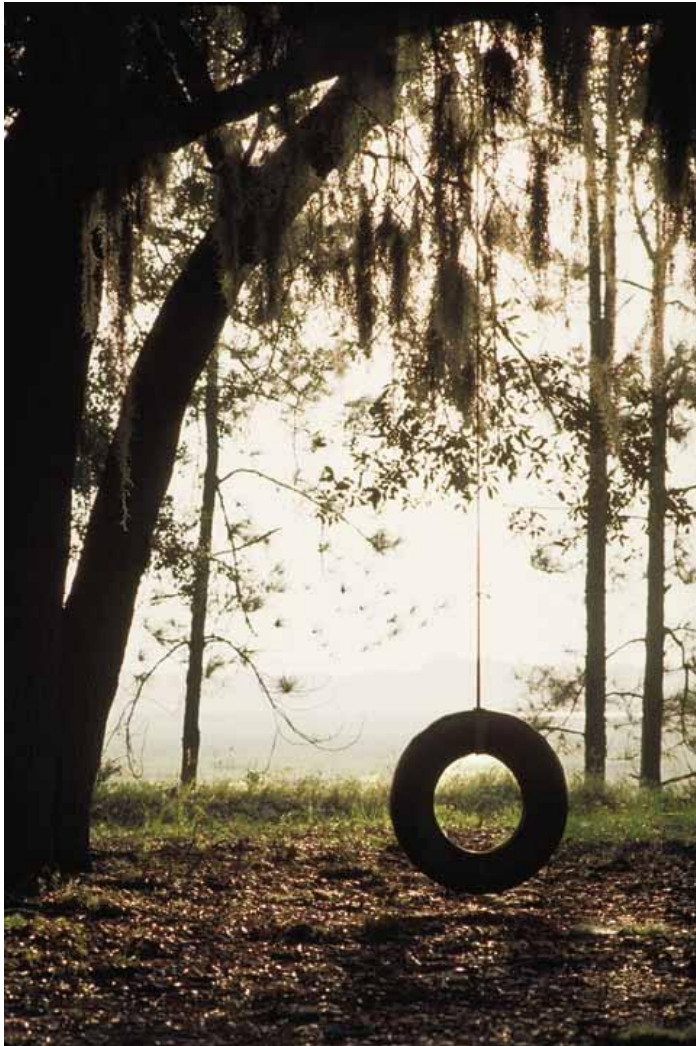
--Lucy Calkins

What is a Memoir?

- It is non-fiction.
- It is autobiographical.
- It is about one event or many events.
- It tells the reader why the event(s) were meaningful.
- It can be a short story or a novel.



What's the Assignment?



- You will be writing your own memoir about one event in your life that had meaning.
- Don't know what to write about? Check out the next slide for some ideas...

What Do You Write About?

The first step to writing your memoir is brainstorming a list of the top ten events and/or memories in your life. Use these questions to help you out if you get stuck!

- Is there a thing or place that is most memorable to you?
- Who is the most memorable person you know?
- What is one process you could teach someone?
- When is the first time you... (rode a bike, went to an amusement park, travelled by yourself...)?
- What is the most important rule you learned as a child?
- What is the most important lesson you would want your child to learn? How did you learn it?
- What do you remember about your first day of school?
- What was your most memorable day at school?
- If you could take back something you've done, what would it be?

Making Your Choice

- You've got your top ten list!
- Select your topic for your memoir from this list.
- Do a bit of brainstorming about your selection (try using a graphic organizer... you'll find some in the blue "Resources" button).
- Be sure to include thoughts, feelings, emotions, and details.



Writing Your Draft



- Write! Write! Write!
- Don't worry about all those periods, commas, and typos...you'll get to that later.
- Just write! Tell your story!
- You want the reader to "be" there with you, to feel and think what you were feeling and thinking.

What Makes a Good Memoir?

- It's true!
- It's reflective: it is about a meaningful experience in which the author learned something.
- It's in first person, using "I" and "me".
- It includes the author's feelings and thoughts.
- It's engaging...the reader wants to know what happened!



The Revision Process



- Many people dread this part of the writing process.
- However, it is not to be missed!
- Reread what you've written.
- Does it make sense?
- Is it logically organized?
- Did you include all the necessary details?
- Does the reader feel like they were there?

The Editing Process



- You're almost done!
- Now it's time to edit.
- Check the following:
 - ▣ Spelling: Use the spell-check feature on your word-processing program.
 - ▣ Grammar: Computers even have grammar-check!
 - ▣ Punctuation: Is it all there?
- Finally, read your work out loud; this will help you *hear* your writing and make sure it sounds great!



Publishing Your Memoir

This is the last step! Submit your memoir to your teacher. You can even submit it to an online magazine. Let your story be heard!