The key question you'll answer is "How has X experience affected the way I think/feel about school or education?" Audience You're answering the key question for yourself and other members of our class. Keep in mind the kinds of things your readers/classmates will understand already and what you'll need to explain and/or describe in greater detail. Goals Your goals as a writer include: ● to decide on a SINGLE EXPERIENCE (X) you want to write about (maybe by trying out two or three to see which one is most interesting to you), ● to remember as much DETAIL about that experience as you can, and ● to think about what SIGNIFICANT CHANGE in your attitude toward school this experience caused and try to describe that change in your writing. ● Length: more than two pages (not including works-cited list if needed). Your essay should be of sufficient length to meet your rhetorical situation. Strategies Strategies for completing the essay include these: 1. Refer to course resources before you begin and while you work on this assignment. Helpful pages are marked with the symbol of a rightwards filled arrow: ►. a. ► “Writing a Narrative: A Roadmap” (EA pp. 185-89) b. ► “Personal Narratives” (LS section W-10, pp. 58-61) 2. Use some of the PREWRITING STRATEGIES we've discussed in class to help you remember specific experiences to write about. ► Refer to “Generating Ideas” (LS W-3a). 3. Select the experience that's most interesting to you to FOCUS on in your essay. ► Refer to “Developing a Tentative Thesis” (LS W-3b). 4. Continue to PREWRITE to develop as much detail about that experience as you can. 1 Remixed from: WAC Clearinghouse, wac.colostate.edu/resources/teaching/guides/composition-intro/#assignments; Thomas Reynolds’ “Essay 1” in A Guide to Teaching Everyone’s an Author ENGL 1301, Prof. Gonzalez, Summer II 2020 Page 1 of 3 Personal Essay Assignment 5. When you've generated enough detail, SELECT the detail that best demonstrates the significance of that experience for you. 6. Meet with a writing tutor and/or someone from your community (classmates, friends, family, etc.) to discuss your assignment at all stages. Be sure to show them this assignment sheet. 7. Consider the RHETORICAL SITUATION of this essay. (You will spend this semester learning about the rhetorical situation, so don’t worry if you feel lost right now!) ► Refer to “Writing Contexts” (LS W-1, pp. 2-5). a. What is the CONTEXT of your writing? What is the immediate occasion or the timing (kairos) of your writing? Why are you writing this essay right now, and how will that influence the way that you write? b. Who is your AUDIENCE? For this essay, your audience is yourself and your classmates. What and how do you need to communicate your ideas in order for your audience to understand you? c. What is your PURPOSE? A narrative is a story, but your purpose here goes beyond simply telling a story. Your story should explain how your experience significantly changed your attitude towards school. d. What is your TOPIC, and what is your STANCE? What do you think and why? Your life is your source of information, so research is not part of this assignment. (But, if you use outside sources, you must give credit in your essay.) e. What are your GENRE, your MEDIUM, and your DESIGN? You are asked to write a personal essay, so what are the conventions of essay writing that will impact your work? How will you organize your work? Your essay will be a written text, so how will this impact your rhetorical choices? Your essay should follow MLA guidelines for format (and citations if needed). ► Refer to “Sample Research Paper, MLA Style” for how your essay should look (LS pp. 161-69). f. What’s your STYLE? What is appropriate and correct for your rhetorical situation? How formal is Jan Brideau in the example essay, and how formal should you be? Consider matching your style with your purpose, topic, and audience. ► Refer to “Writing a Narrative: An Annotated Example” (EA pp.175-78). 8. Write a ROUGH DRAFT in which you concentrate on getting out your ideas and explaining them, without worrying too much about smaller issues like grammar and punctuation. ► Refer to “Organizing and Drafting” (LS W-3c) and “Developing Paragraphs” (LS W-4).