

would you like the reader to learn by reading your story? What feeling or attitude would you like the reader to have about the story you are telling?

2. Think through (or outline) what happened first, second, third, and so on. Try not to leave out anything the reader will need to understand the story. For example, if you were telling the story of your car accident, you wouldn't want to neglect to mention who was driving or what caused the accident.
3. Try to divide the action into major blocks. You may find, however, that you have to write out the entire story to see where the logical breaks in the action are. For example, you might want to divide a narrative about a car accident into what happened before the accident, what happened during the accident, and what happened after.
4. Focus on the people involved in your narrative, and try to describe them accurately and colorfully.
5. Focus on the feelings you experienced at different times in your story. Try to make these feelings clear to the reader.

1. **Avoid stringing together a series of events without dramatizing any of them or showing their significance.** For example, no one wants to read a mere series of "this happened and then this happened and then we did this."
2. **Avoid a list.** Make sure the events are logically connected with appropriate transitions to help the reader follow the sequence of events. For example, the following list isn't particularly interesting: "We arrived at my grandmother's. We put our bags away. We spent the afternoon cooking Thanksgiving dinner." If you link the events together with transitions, the sequence makes more sense for the reader: "We arrived at my grandmother's around 1 pm. After putting our bags away, we spent most of the afternoon preparing all the family's favorite Thanksgiving dishes."



Select one of the topics below to develop as a paragraph or an essay.

1. How did you meet your best friend, girl/boyfriend, or spouse? Tell the story of how you met. Include details about the place, the events, and your first impressions.
2. Tell the story of how you made a significant decision in your life (going to school, getting married, quitting a job, applying for a scholarship, etc.).

