

<b>Lesson Plan—Week 4: Braiding a story</b>	
<p><i>Topic</i></p> <p><b>Building Your Narrative House:</b> Learning to tell a convincing, compelling, instructive and memorable story.</p>	
<p><i>Learning objective</i></p> <p>Become familiar with narrative structure, flow, and scene/information balance in creative nonfiction, and incorporate these principles into your final draft.</p>	
	<i>Instructional Aid</i>
<p><b>Anticipatory set: activating prior knowledge and setting up for the topic of the week</b>            What examples of nonfiction (essays, books, short stories, magazine articles) that you read over the past year stood out for you as memorable stories, well told?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Each instructor shares one example of a story they recently read, which in their mind show-cased excellent nonfiction writing</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Pre-assessment and self-assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your perspective on objectivity and “just the facts” when it comes to writing nonfiction about real life characters who are still living, or still remembered by eye-witnesses, friends, and family living today?</li> <li>• How has your learning about writing dialogue and writing about self as a character in Week 3 influenced or informed your perspective on “just the facts” in nonfiction?</li> </ul>	<p><i>After the pre-assignment, share the University of Oxford Classics Notes “Speeches And Speakers In Thucydides” to show how “objectivity” and “just the facts” have been a topic for non-fiction writers for thousands of years, literally.</i></p>
<p><b>Learning activity</b>  <i>Lecture</i>            Think Write Publish fellows share their experiences as writers learning and discovering the creative nonfiction writing craft during the 2016-2017 fellowship year.</p> <p>Introducing the <b>3 Rs of Creative Nonfiction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research;</li> <li>• Real world exploration;</li> <li>• Review and fact-check.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lee Gutkind, 2012, Three R’s of Narrative Nonfiction</i></li> <li>• <i>Tim Bascom, 2013, Picturing the Personal Essay: A Visual Guide</i></li> <li>• <i>Roorbach &amp; Keckler, 2009, Craft True-to-Life Nonfiction Characters</i></li> </ul>

<p><b>Beads on a string:</b> combining story and exposition</p> <p><b>Time is in the eye of the beholder:</b> bring the reader straight to the cliff-hanger part of the story where something is at stake rather than going in a chronological order</p> <p><i>Student activity</i> Practice combining a short scene with some background information that complements the scene. Try arranging the scene and information in several ways. For example information can come before, after or in the middle of the scene; information can be split into several small packages (in this case, sentences), or presented as a single paragraph. Explore the variations and see which combinations of scene plus information interest you most as a reader and a writer.</p>	
<p><b>Post-lecture reinforcement</b> The role of “exposition” (the background information) in connecting the parts of the story together</p> <p><i>Returning to the theme of Memory from week 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we connect and draw a personal lesson from on scenes our memories hold?</li> <li>• Consider the role and voice of the Narrator (here – you, the writer) who, through fragments of exposition helps the reader understand the impact and implications of personal experiences shared in the story part of the narrative.</li> </ul> <p><i>Returning to the theme of Artifact from week 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where in your story would a detailed, precise, sensory description of a specific item help the reader feel immersed in your story?</li> </ul> <p><i>Returning to the themes of Self and Dialogue from week 3</i></p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What role does dialogue play in revealing the characters in your story (including yourself)?</li> <li>• How do the people in our stories shape our own ideas and those of our readers?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Week 4 closing assessment: Coming Full Circle</b></p> <p>Students review their own drafts based on questions provided by the instructors.</p> <p>For those looking for an extra challenge, students are invited to focus on combining the draft pieces developed in weeks 1, 2 and 3 into a single unified piece that expresses Your Big Idea (which may or may not be the same Big Idea with which you started in week 1)</p> <p>Students are invited to volunteer for follow up group(s) where those who have a week 4 narrative can share it with others (only those who completed week 4 narrative) for mutual feedback.</p> <p>This activity is optional and highly encouraged for the self-motivated group who will come to week 4</p>	<p><i>Develop a closing questionnaire that will re-inforce writing craft pointers, with questions such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Did the last page/last paragraph of the story answer the questions raised in the first page/first paragraph of the story? Did your story come full circle?</i></li> <li>• <i>Looking at your story with the eyes of a reader you can imagine, do you think your reader would enjoy meeting the characters in your narrative? Are they real characters who seem like real, complex people?</i></li> <li>• <i>How do you feel about sharing your story with people featured in your story? How do you think they will feel about their “characters” you presented?</i></li> </ul>

### **Week 4 Learning and Instructional Materials**

Tim Bascom, Picturing the Personal Essay: A Visual Guide, Creative Nonfiction Issue # 49, Summer 2013. Available at [www.creativenonfiction.org/online-reading/picturing-personal-essay-visual-guide](http://www.creativenonfiction.org/online-reading/picturing-personal-essay-visual-guide)

Lee Gutkind, Three R’s of Narrative Nonfiction, The New York Times/The Opinion Pages Dec. 17, 2012. Available at [opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/12/17/three-rs-of-narrative-nonfiction/](http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/12/17/three-rs-of-narrative-nonfiction/)

Bill Roorbach & Kristen Keckler, Craft True-to-Life Nonfiction Characters, Writers’ Digest Aug 6, 2009. Available at [www.writersdigest.com/writing-articles/by-writing-goal/improve-my-writing/craft-true-to-life-nonfiction-characters](http://www.writersdigest.com/writing-articles/by-writing-goal/improve-my-writing/craft-true-to-life-nonfiction-characters)

University of Oxford Classics Notes, Speeches and Speakers in Thucydides, 2010.  
Available at [www.oxbridgenotes.co.uk/revision\\_notes/classics-university-of-oxford-thucydides-and-the-peloponnesian-war/samples/speeches-and-speakers-in-thucydides](http://www.oxbridgenotes.co.uk/revision_notes/classics-university-of-oxford-thucydides-and-the-peloponnesian-war/samples/speeches-and-speakers-in-thucydides)

*For background information, simply look up (for example in Wikipedia) “Pericles Funeral Oration” by historian Thucydides; and there are many articles online about “speeches” in historical works of Thucydides as representing what the writer thinks was said on those occasions*