

### **Memoir Assignment Sheet**

You are to write about yourself and your first week of high school to be opened up the last week of your senior year. Think of this as a personal time-capsule, it should represent who you are at this moment in your life. This writing is meant to be personal, so be honest and thoughtful. I will read over it only to validate completion and that the content is school-appropriate. When I see you next, we will seal it up with your name on the front, and it will be returned to you right before you graduate!

You will have time in class to work on your “memoir,” but you are expected to complete it as homework.

The purposes of doing this writing are:

1. To provide a thoughtful record of your life and who you are now
2. To anchor in time your current views, attitudes, philosophy, and outlook
3. To explore your feelings and opinions about the initial impact of high school
4. To create a document that, years from now, will have significant value to you

The topics to consider for your memoir are:

- **ME, NOW:** my hopes, fears, dreams, intentions, goals, problems, concerns, likes, dislikes, joys, frustrations; what I like about myself; what I don't like about myself; what I'm proud of; what I think about; what bothers me; who I am, etc.
- **MY WORLD:** a description of my first days at school, my impressions of the people around me, my inner feelings in this new environment, friends I have class with or do not. I may also include my home, bedroom, neighborhood; my favorite places to go; chores, allowance, pet(s), possessions, clothes, religion, current events; **FAVORITES** – books, music groups, movies, TV, etc. Include a map of your room, street, etc.
- **WHAT I DO:** my hobbies, pastimes, sports, school activities; what I do when I'm alone; what I do with friends; favorite snacks and foods; chores; how I spend my weekends and vacations; special activities I do, organizations I belong to, etc.
- **PEOPLE IN MY LIFE:** my family, siblings, aunts & uncles, grandparents, friends, best friend(s), teachers, the opposite sex, “him” or “her”, who I like, people I'd like to know better, people I admire and respect important people in my life, romances, people who annoy me, etc.
- **MY FUTURE:** predictions, what I want to do, my long range intentions, what I'm looking forward to; what I'm dreading; my goals, my hopes and fears for the world; summer vacation, high school, college, marriage, employment, etc.

In doing this memoir, you do not have to write about each sub-topic, write about what is important to you. Your memoir should be at least 2-3 typed paragraphs (about a page). This memoir is for you, and it should deal with the elements and aspects that are important and real in your life – the good, the bad, and the ugly! The more honest you are with yourself, the more you will appreciate and value your memoir in years to come!

\*Also come to class prepared with a favorite quote! You will be putting this on your envelope!

This is an example of one student's memoir:

First, the big news. This summer has been good and bad. My parents got divorced – that would be the bad part – but I got to go on two vacations and we got to get a dog. XX is the sweetest dog ever. I know why we got her, the whole psychology behind it. Parents get divorced, distract the kids with something to love and care for, blah, blah, blah. Whatever. I have wanted a dog for as long as I can remember, and now I have one. She sleeps at the foot of my bed. My parents were fighting and that has now stopped, so things should improve now. I love them both and just want them to be happy. We also had to move, so that was pretty awful, but I got to decorate my new room, and I have posters of XX, my favorite. I put a bunch of pictures around my mirror, mostly of me with my friends. My bedroom is pink and gray and I got ruffled pink curtains that reach the floor. I ordered a bean bag chair that is a gray design but it hasn't arrived yet. I like to read in bean bag chairs! I still need a desk, so until I get one, I will need to do my homework at the kitchen table. My mom thinks this is a good idea so that I can keep an eye on my little sister. Not exactly what I would like to do! But, I can tell that my mom is worried about us and the divorce, and I will help out. I don't want to make things worse. My sister and I have been sharing walking the dog, but luckily my mom walks her first things in the morning when she goes out for her run. I see myself as responsible for my age and I have been told by people that I have "a good head on my shoulders."

I am not sure if I feel excited or scared now that I am in high school. Maybe a little bit of both. Everyone says high school is horrible, but maybe they don't remember how awful middle school was! I am glad to escape that prison – at least this one is larger! And seriously, would it hurt to have the outside of our schools painted more cheerfully? Why do they get mad at us for calling it a prison when they make it look like one? My plan of what to wear my first day of school began probably at the start of August – something that would identify me as noteworthy and admirable. Middle school at XX was horrible. Principal XX made our lives miserable. I couldn't even sit with my friend XX at lunch, even though we had lunch together! I have high hopes for high school. I will get straight A's, have lots of friends, and at the end of it all, I will get into a great college. My goal is to be a veterinarian, so I need to do very well in school. Right now, I can't really believe the summer is over and school has started up again. It makes my head spin.

My little sister, XX, also started at a new school this year and she asked me to help her pick out her outfits for the first week of school. I only have one class with my best friend XX, but there are some other girls I know in my Biology class and also in Geometry. So far, most of the teachers seem a little strict and intimidating. I am being very quiet in class. I already got homework the first week! The pre-AP World History class will be the hardest – that's what everyone says. I am going to try really hard to keep up with the assignments because everyone says that if you don't you will get a C. My English class is where I can sit with my best friend. She is in front of me. We plan on studying together for the tests. All the boys in my grade are gross. No one is interesting. On the other hand, the older boys in school now are hot and they can drive. XX's brother is super hot, but he has a girlfriend. In my Drama class there may be some boys that have potential, but we will see. I would like to have a date for Homecoming, but I can go with my friends if I don't. We have already made plans. XX and I also plan to join some clubs this year, we are just not sure which ones yet. We agree that we will be super involved so that we can meet more people – especially out of our grade.

Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment.

**Buddha**