PERSONAL WRITING

Personal writing is **subjective** *(based on personal opinions or feelings rather than facts or evidence).* When you write personal papers, the content of your writing is based on your own observation, experience, or opinion. Writing assignments that ask you to state your opinion about an issue, to document what you observed, to relate a subject to your own life, to share a story, or to provide a description of a person, place, object, or event are considered personal papers. Personal opinion and narrative essays fall into this category, as do some reflective papers. If you have ever written a paper about what you did on your summer vacation or given your opinion about an issue, you have written a personal paper. Personal writing asks *what you think* about a subject or *what you observed or experienced.*

In personal papers, you are the speaker, so you use the pronouns, *I, me, my, mine, we,* or *our.* These pronouns are known as first–person pronouns, so this type of writing is said to be from a first–person point of view. In personal papers, you are also speaking directly to your readers, so the use of the pronouns *you* or *your,* which are called second–person pronouns, is also permitted. In personal writing, you must state your position or opinion on an issue and support your point of view with reasons, examples, personal **anecdotes** *(a short, personal story about an incident or an event)*, illustrations, or stories. Below is an example of a paragraph from a personal paper about growing vegetables.

*I learned to grow a vegetable garden when I was a young child. Every spring, my mother and I would work together to prepare the vegetable beds. Then, I would plant the seeds according to the directions on the back of each vegetable seed package. I would look forward to checking the garden each day. When the seeds began to sprout, I always thought it was magical.*

Read a Sample Personal Paper
EXPOSITORY WRITING

Exposition, or expository writing, shares information or explains a subject to readers. You may have prior knowledge of a subject that you communicate to readers, or you may be required to write a combination paper in which you share your own ideas along with information you found by conducting research on the topic. Writing assignments that ask you to compare and contrast two ideas, to discuss problems and solutions, to critique an article you have read, to explain a concept or a process, to write a report, to summarize what you have learned, or to analyze issues all require an expository paper.

Expository writing should be objective (based on facts or observable data rather than opinion and undistorted by persona interpretation, emotion, or bias). Unlike personal or persuasive writing, you should not share your personal opinion about the topic or judge the information you present. Your task is simply to present it as fairly and accurately as you can. Because expository writing focuses on the subject matter, it generally uses a third-person point of view (he, she, they, the subject, the author). The example below illustrates an expository paragraph about growing vegetables.

Growing vegetables requires planting seeds or seedlings (which are small plants) in the garden, when no threat of frost exists. Small seedlings are tender and can be easily damaged when their fine roots are exposed to air or disturbed during the transplanting process. This condition, known as "transplant shock," can prevent the plants from thriving in their new environment or may even kill them. To prevent transplant shock, seedlings should be watered with a solution of vitamin B–1 immediately after they are planted.

Read a Sample Expository Paper