

Denecker
ENGL 302 Advanced Writing
Assignment #1
My Turn

Assignment: For your first formal assignment, you will be writing a personal narrative in the vein of a “My Turn” article suitable for publication in venue such as *Newsweek*.

Audience: General public

Approach:

1. Explore a moment of truth, revelation, or clarity in your life, or speak to a contemporary issue that you find compelling and worth sharing with others.
2. Use good **Notice and Focus** techniques as you write. In other words, you may broach a large, overarching topic and then focus on one aspect of it, or you may consider a major revelation in your life and then pinpoint the turning point or cause.
3. Make your words work for you. Use words that allow your readers to feel, see, think, experience as you do. **Don't tell your readers what to think; show them the way.**
4. As you formulate your thesis, recall the advice of Rosenwasser and Stephen that “A strong thesis comes from carefully examining and questioning your subject to arrive at a theory about its meaning and significance that would not have been immediately obvious to your readers” (27). **Also note that a thesis needs tension—“the pressure of one idea against another idea, of one potentially viable way of seeing things against another viable, but finally less satisfactory way of seeing things” (Rosenwasser and Stephen 27).
5. Give attention to how you begin and end your essay; we will cover possible approaches in class.

Length: 3-5 pages typed; there will be the option of formatting this as an actual **My Turn** piece.

Grading: Your grade will be based on how well you fulfill the assignment as outlined above.

Schedule: Initial draft due **Friday, Jan. 18**
Full Rough Draft due: **Wednesday, Jan. 23**
Final Draft due date: **Friday, Jan. 25**

Details:

- Give your paper a good, strong title that reflects the content of your work
- Earmark a “pull out phrase” for a caption
- Ready an appropriate photo if you plan to follow the actual **My Turn** formatting
- Proof-read your work carefully
- Stop in at the campus Writing Center or set up a workshop time with me if you have further questions or need additional help.