

Personal Narrative Brainstorm Graphic Organizer

Part 1

Write about a time in your life when one of your beliefs was challenged by a person or event and underwent a change.	• Studying abroad in India for the first time. • Surrounded by other students who felt much cooler and more "artsy" than me. • Felt intimidated both by the unfamiliar setting and by being with a group so different from me. • Before the trip, I thought I wanted to go to law school. • Realized I was mostly planning on law school because my father expected me to. • Being in a new country around authentic and passionate people pushed me to reflect on what I actually wanted. • Came to the realization that I wanted to pursue a master's degree in English instead.
Write about a time when you did not have the power to change a situation, and the only option was to remove yourself from it.	
Write about a time when you moved to a new place or a new school.	• The day I moved to NYC. • Met the apartment broker at the building and received the keys. • Walked into the apartment and realized I had left a suitcase with all my shoes in the cab—felt panicked. • Found the cab receipt, tracked down the driver, and called him. • Somehow convinced him to turn around and bring the suitcase back. • He was angry, but I got my suitcase back.
Write about a time when a friend or group of friends (or other group) made you realize something about yourself or the world, or helped you through a difficult time.	
Write about a time when you turned to a teacher, coach, or mentor for advice.	• Meeting with my dissertation advisor in his office. • Honest conversation about not feeling passionate enough to write a PhD dissertation. • Shared that I also imagined a different life in a larger city. • He gave me honest advice: finishing the PhD would be difficult without passion for the project, and job prospects were limited and often in remote areas. • The conversation led to me leaving the program, applying to teaching programs, moving to NYC, and becoming a high school English teacher.