Writing Assignments for Narration

1. Trace the path you expect to follow to establish yourself in your chosen profession, considering possible obstacles you may face and how you expect to deal with them. Include a thesis statement that conveys the importance of your goals. If you like, you may refer to an essay in this book that focuses on work—for example, “My Mother Never Worked” (page 118).

2. Write a personal narrative looking back from some point in the far future on your own life as you hope others will see it. Use third person if you like, and write your own obituary; or, use first person, assessing your life in a letter to your great-grandchildren.

3. Write a news article recounting in objective terms the events described in an essay that appears anywhere in this text—for example, “Who Killed Benny Parejo?” (page 267) or “Grant and Lee: A Study in Contrasts” (page 309). Include a descriptive headline.

4. Write the introductory narrative for the home page of your family’s (or community’s) website. In this historical narrative, trace the roots of your family or your hometown or community. Be sure to include specific detail, dialogue, and descriptions of people and places. (You may also include visuals if you like.)

5. Write an account of one of these “firsts”: your first serious argument with your parents; your first experience with physical violence or danger; your first extended stay away from home; your first encounter with someone whose culture was very different from your own; or your first experience with the serious illness or death of a close friend or relative. Make sure your essay includes a thesis statement your narrative can support.

6. **Working with Sources.** George Orwell deals with the consequences of failing to act. Write an essay or story recounting what would have happened if Orwell had not shot the elephant. Be sure to document references to Orwell and to include a works-cited page. (See Chapter 18 for information on MLA documentation.)

7. **Working with Sources.** Write a narrative about a time when you were an outsider, isolated because of social, intellectual, or ethnic differences between you and others. Did you resolve the problems your isolation created? Explain. If you like, you may refer to the Orwell essay in this chapter or to “Just Walk On By” (page 196), taking care to include parenthetical documentation and a works-cited page. (See Chapter 18 for information on MLA documentation.)

8. Imagine a meeting between any two people who appear in this chapter’s reading selections. Using dialogue and narrative, write an account of this meeting.

9. List the five books you have read that most influenced you at important stages of your life. Then, write your literary autobiography, tracing your personal development through these books. (Or, write your ward-