The assignment: Who are you as a reader and a writer? What is your attitude toward reading and writing? Have you always felt this way about reading and writing? Where do you think this attitude and these feelings originate? **In this essay—a literacy narrative—you will narrate/describe one or two specific moments, events, or experiences that influenced your current attitudes toward reading and writing.** Along with your descriptive narrative, you will also explain how this experience or experiences affect your present attitudes, feelings, and/or sense of confidence in reading and writing.

Key features of a Literacy Narrative:

- **A well-told story:** explore the role that reading or writing played at some specific time in your life.
- **Vivid detail:** details can bring a narrative to life for readers by giving them vivid mental images of the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and textures of the world in which your story takes place.
- **Some indication of the narrative’s significance (the “so what” factor):** According to the authors of Real Writing, “In its broadest sense, narration is any account or any even or series of events” in which you “relate an incident or use an anecdote(a very brief story) to make a point” (321). Think about how you can make it clear for readers what point you will make through this narrative. Why does the incident you narrate matter to you now?

Additional guidelines:

- **Length:** 2 ½ to 3 pages (at least 700 words)
- **Format:** Follow guidelines on p.3 of your syllabus
- **Writing in the narrative mode:** Read carefully the description of narration on pp. 357-360 in Models for Writers. The authors state: “Good narration has five essential features: a clear context; well-chosen and thoughtfully emphasized details; a logical, often chronological organization; an appropriate and consistent point of view; and a meaningful point or purpose”(357). Consider using dialogue between the characters in your narrative.
- **Editing:** Edit carefully for grammatical errors

Choosing a Topic: Consider using one of the following as a starting point:

- Any early memory about writing or reading that you recall vividly. Why is this event significant to you now?
- Someone who taught you to read or write.
- A book or other text that has been significant for you in some way.
- A writing or reading task that you found (or still find) difficult or challenging.
- A memento that represents an important moment in your reading/writing development.
- The origins of your current attitudes about writing or reading (either positive or negative experience).
Literacy Narrative Checklist:

Include the following in your final folder:

_______ 1. Writing Exercise #3: generating ideas for your essay

>“Beginning to write, you discover what you have to write about.”
>—Kit Reed

_______ 2. Rough draft: After choosing a tentative topic, sit down and freewrite for a page or two on your topic. Don’t worry about organization at this point. The idea is to just get your ideas out on paper.

>“What makes me happy is rewriting . . . It’s like cleaning house, getting rid of all the junk, getting things in the right order, tightening things up.”
>—Ellen Goodman

_______ 3. Writing Exercise #4: structuring your essay and identifying a main point

_______ 4. First full draft: Now take a look at the writing you generated in your rough draft. What do you still need to add to your literacy narrative? What do you need to take out? How can you best organize your narrative into coherent paragraphs that move smoothly from one idea to the next? Are there places where you could add more vivid description? Dialogue? Transitions? This draft should be 2 ½ to 3 pages long.

>“I do a lot of revising . . . Occasionally you can hit it right the first time. More often, you don’t.”
>—John Dos Passos

_______ 5. Peer review (completed in class)

_______ 6. Final draft: Revise, edit, and proofread.

_______ 7. One or two paragraphs (typed on a separate sheet of paper please) reflecting on your writing process for this essay. What problem(s) did you encounter as you wrote this essay? How did you solve the problem(s)? What part of this essay do you like the best? Why? What part would you change if you were to revise? Why?