

Session #7

General announcement: Now turn your response to a particular assignment into an independent work—one that reaches its audience without relying on some external framework. If the story leads you in a new direction, that's fine. If you find yourself completely rethinking your plan and your story, you should check with me first. The central requirement now is that you write an essay in which personal narrative plays a key role.

Discussion of three student essays on The MIT Server.

Guidelines for workshops:

Starting point: Do not spend any of the workshop time defending what you have written. The value of the workshop depends upon your listening to what your readers have to say.

Specific workshop issues: The person who wrote extensive comments should serve as leader/moderator for the discussion of a particular essay.

Role of generalizations in your partners' essays

Do they claim too much?

Do the generalizations emerge naturally from the narrative?

Narrative stance:

Does the writer preserve a consistent relationship to the characters in the narrative—particularly the writer's past self?

Is the writer too sarcastic or too distant?

Does the writer enter into the perspective of the central character?

What might the writer do to capture more effectively the perspective of the younger person in the narrative?

What could the writer do better to recapture the original experience?

Have the **writer identify those questions** in the workshop assignment sheet that he or she would like the group to discuss.