Hello Students,

This resource packet includes a project that you can work on independently at home. You should also have project packets for some of the other courses you are enrolled in. These projects are standards-aligned and designed to meet the Remote Learning instructional minutes guidelines by grade band.

High school project packets are available for the following courses:

- English 1
- Algebra
- Biology
- US History
- English 2
- Geometry
- Chemistry
- World Studies
- English 3
- Algebra 2
- Physics
- Civics
- English 4

### 9-10th Grade ELA Project: Writing a Personal Narrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Time</th>
<th>~225 minutes of project time for each course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade Level Standards</td>
<td>RI.9-10.5. Analyze in detail how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter); RI.9-10.6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose; W.9-10.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver Support Option</td>
<td>Discuss recent experiences, texts and writing prompts with student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials Needed</td>
<td>Pen/pencil and Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question to Explore</td>
<td>We want to hear your story, told in your unique voice. We’re not asking you to write to a particular theme or to use a specific structure or style; instead, we hope you’ll experiment and tell a tale that matters to you, in a way you enjoy telling it. We’re going to inspire you with lots of mentor texts to read and mini-lesson writing instructions along the way that will show you what writers do, and how you can do those same things too as you tell your incredible story.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Direction: Each activity in this unit begins differently. Each builds on the thinking and writing you did the day before. Start each day with a smile and the knowledge that your life is extraordinary and people want to hear about it!

Activity 1: Understanding The Narrative Arc & Drafting your Narrative - Narrative arc relates to constructing a story in a way that is complete—with characters, a conflict, and a resolution.

Here is an example:

The Mayor and the People of Chicago - Recently, Governor JB Pritzker ordered Illinoisians to stay at home to help prevent the spread of COVID 19. Mayor Lori Lightfoot, frustrated by what she saw happening on a warm spring day said, “Over the past few days, we’ve seen crowds of a hundred or more congregating together, particularly around our lakefront, and along The 606 and other places. This is a blatant violation of Gov. Pritzker’s stay-at-home order. Your conduct — yours — is posing a direct threat to our public health. And without question, your continued failure to abide by these life-saving orders will erase any progress that we have made over the past week in slowing the spread of this disease, and could lead to more deaths.” Shortly thereafter, she ordered the lakefront and the 606 trail closed to the public.

This is a story! It contains characters, a conflict and a resolution. The characters are Governor Pritzker, Mayor Lightfoot, and the people of Illinois. The conflict is that the governor and the mayor have instructed the people to stay at home, but some didn’t. The resolution is that, for the public’s safety, the mayor closed public places where people had gathered (to protect them from disease).

A quick way to remember Narrative Arc is: Somebody Wanted But So.

- **Somebody** (the mayor)
- **Wanted** (Chicagoans to stay inside to prevent the spread of coronavirus)
- **But** (the people didn’t comply)
- **So** (she closed the public spaces to the public).

Sometimes people add a then. This is optional. If you wanted to add a then, you might say: Then, the mayor became very popular. The people of Chicago began to make memes of the mayor telling everyone to stay home. The mayor liked the memes, and they became a great way to get the people to buy in.

Before we tackle “The Mayor and the People of Chicago,” let’s consider another story that we’re familiar with: Snow White. The evil queen wants to be the fairest in all the land, but the magic mirror proclaims Snow White, her step-daughter, as the fairest of all. The Queen flies into a rage and orders a huntsman to take Snow White into the woods to kill her, but the huntsman has a change of heart and allows Snow White to run away into the woods. See the SWBS chart below.
The evil queen

To be the fairest in all the land

Her step-daughter, Snow White, was fairer

She ordered the huntsman to kill Snow White

A. Complete the final row of the chart with elements from “The Mayor and the People of Chicago”Let’s place this story into a SWBS chart. How do we do this?

- Choose a character mentioned.
- What does the character want/need, or what is the character’s goal?
- What is the problem that the character faces?
- What is the solution to the problem or does the character reach the goal?

B. Read “Hey is not Heyy” by Julia Digeronimo and complete the SWBS chart.

Hey is not Heyy - “Heyy,” his message read. My heart fluttered. One “y” may have left me upset, but the second “y” — that was promising. Such a simple yet ambiguous greeting. Did he want to hang out? Was he going to confess his love? Oh! He was typing. A double text! It was my lucky day. I broke a sweat waiting for his response. How should I respond? “Hi!”? “I am in love with you”? My message had to show the same amount of interest as his. He responded! “Sorry didn’t mean the extra ‘y.’” Oh.


C. Create two SWBS charts on your paper. Then, complete one chart for Julia as the “Somebody” and the second chart for her texting partner as the ‘somebody.’

D. Determine the meaning of words from context (figuring out what a word means by looking at the other words around that word, and reading what comes before and after. Write the answers below your charts.

a. After reading this story, what do you think the word ambiguous means?

b. What words or lines from the story support your answer to part A?

E. It’s time! On a separate sheet of paper, write a draft of your own personal narrative. Here are a few prompts to help you get started. Be sure that your story is school-appropriate, and something that you are willing to share with your teachers, peers, and strangers.

- Have you ever been in love?
- What are your secret survival strategies?
- What assumptions do people make about you?
- What small things have you seen and taken note of today?
- How do you deal with haters?
- Do adults who are ‘only trying to help’ sometimes make things worse?
- What are you good at?
- What work, sport or pastime do you like to do at night?
- What are your best life hacks?
- What are you grateful for?

Remember to write your piece as a story, not as a response to the question. You must have a Somebody, a Wants, a But, and a So!
F. After you have finished the draft of your narrative, complete a SWBS chart for your story:

**Activity 2: Reading like a writer to revise your narrative** - Reading like a writer is a three step process

- **Notice.** Notice things that the writer does. Example: “Hmm, this word has been repeated several times.”
- **Ask.** Ask, “why did the writer do this?” Maybe discuss it with someone in your household. Example: “Julia Degeronimo used a lot of question marks and exclamation marks in her story, Hey is not Heyy. Why? What was the effect on us, the readers?”
- **See it.** Envision it in your own writing. Try it on! For example, if you were noticing in the previous story you might write something new or rewrite something you wrote and try to use a lot of question marks and exclamation marks.

A. Read both stories below several times. (Yes, both stories!)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story A - Washing Hair in the Kitchen Sink</th>
<th>Notice</th>
<th>Ask and Discuss</th>
<th>Envision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I watched her head dip beneath the faucet. Her aged hands fumbled with the hot and cold. Light poured in through the kitchen window. Afterward, her shirt was damp, her hair clean, and she thanked me for standing next to her in case she fell. I was filled with love. As an educator, I know: We must help one another while honoring each other's independence. I can only hope that someday someone will be standing next to me, and that someday I can be as beautiful as my grandmother washing her hair in the kitchen sink. — Sara Tennyson, <em>The New York Times</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is one thing that the writer of Story A did in the story?</td>
<td>Why did s/he do that? What was the effect on the reader?</td>
<td>Try to include this technique in your draft.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is one thing that the writer of Story B did in the story?</td>
<td>Why did s/he do that? What was the effect on the reader?</td>
<td>Try to include this technique in your draft.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Story B**

**Frugal Kindness**

“The sink is leaking,” I told my 77-year-old landlady. She came up to my Parisian attic apartment with a 16-inch wrench. We tightened nuts at random, playing plumber. “Go buy some tape and wrap everything,” she said. “I’m very economical; during World War II we had nothing!” Frustrated by our haphazard method, I fumed in the sink’s wet underbelly. But then I remembered the homemade cookies on my counter. This same frugality underpinned my landlady’s generosity. “I love you very much,” she said the day she gave me those cookies. “I love you too,” I said. — Matthew Barrett, *The New York Times*
C. Get out the personal story that you wrote previously and reread it. Complete the “Envision” section of the chart. Revise your story to include either the technique that the writers used. If you don’t feel that there is more to explore with that story, write a new story and include a writer’s technique. Take a look back at the prompts on page 2.

Activity 3: The Four Essential Tools of Analysis - You can find these elements in different ways in almost any narrative text:

- **Passion**: The writer’s compass. Passion is the writer’s wholehearted investment in the text she is exploring. Deeper than admiration, the writer takes her subject seriously and writes full of conviction.
- **Ideas**: The places the writer explores. Ideas encompass everything the writer considers and discusses including claims, reasons, and evidence.
- **Structure**: The maps a writer uses to chart his course. Structure includes the writer’s focus, paraphrasing, how he leads and concludes and visual structure tools.
- **Authority**: The writer’s know-how that enables him to explore a text. Authority speaks to a writer’s content knowledge, tone, word choice, and use of grammar and conventions.

A. This is hard to get your mind around, right? Read “Listen to your Mother” and the example of how to use these tools for analysis:

**Listen to Your Mother** - Under the guise of being a dutiful — not heartbroken — son, I called my mother on the second anniversary of my father’s death. “Michael, I’m not going to be one of those widows complaining about how tough life is,” she said. “I got out of bed, went to the gym and had lunch with friends. Your dad would have been disappointed if I didn’t. None of this ‘poor me.’” Turns out I needed that call more than she. My regret for being unable to visit my father a final time faded. My mother is right: Life is for living. — Michael Pointe, *New York Times*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Tool</th>
<th>Example from the Text <em>Listen To Your Mother</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>This writer’s passion is his parents, every sentence is about them. His main concern is how he and his mother will live after his father’s death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas</td>
<td>The writer’s idea is how a person should live after the death of a loved one. He tells us how a person should live after the death of a loved one. I know this because his conclusion is that his mother is right, life is for the living.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>The writer tells the story of one phone conversation with his mother and the conclusion he drew from that call.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>The writer stated that his own father died, and he is speaking on that experience. His authority is his own life experience. This is what gives him the authority to write on the topic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Payback in Guadalajara - When I was 8, my parents split up. My father took up with another woman and had a completely different family. Who wants the old family around when there is a new one? But it turned out that my little sister, Velia, and I couldn’t stay with our mother either, because she hit us. So a social worker sent us to El Instituto Cabañas, a home for children in Guadalajara.

The maestras at El Instituto kept us busy after school boxing candies, sewing tablecloths and making dolls. There was no time to feel lonely and unloved. Velia and I lived in separate buildings and saw each other only from 7 to 7:30 in the evening, when we met in the kitchen. The maestras assigned every child a number. I was 232. Your number was on everything from your bed to your underwear. I have never forgotten the number 232.

Children lived at El Instituto for many reasons. Some were custody cases, like Velia and me. Others survived abuse or abandonment. If no family claimed you, you took the last name Ruiz Cabañas, after the founder of the orphanage. You were a child of El Instituto.

One such Ruiz Cabañas was Cecilia, a girl with Down syndrome. The maestras saw her as a vegetable. To them, she was summed up by her disease. But she knew things. She knew the names of everyone in our room. She was on time to shower. She insisted on watching us dance with the folklórico rope, even though she was never included.

One day after folklórico, I sat on the floor to take my shoes off. Cecilia grabbed one of my shoes and clocked me over the head with its heel. I cried out. Blood drizzled over my eye. She pointed, smiling. I expected an apology, but none came. The maestras said that nothing was to be done, because of Cecilia’s “condition.” But I’d been punished for less. If I was late to breakfast, I didn’t eat. If I didn’t get my uniform to the laundry on time, I would keep wearing that soiled jumper.

So I began collecting leftover food from supper and pins from sewing, and for the next few nights, with Velia looking out, I put food around the kitchen. When baby cockroaches appeared, I skewered them on the pins. The bugs struggled, their legs moving but going nowhere. Back in my room, I placed them on the windowsill, out of sight.

Saturday morning my father picked me up for our weekly visit. I don’t have many good memories of my mother, but I always associate my father with candy. Once, he brought me a giant swirled lollipop for my birthday. I cracked it on the sidewalk so everyone could have a taste. This time I asked for Hershey’s Kisses. I ate most of them but hid the rest deep in my bookbag.

When the time came, I unwrapped each Kiss and molded the warm chocolate around an insect. After rewrapping them, I put the candied bugs into a bag. After folklórico the next day, I sat next to Cecilia. Velia joined us.

“Do you like candy?” I whispered to Cecilia, revealing the bag of Kisses. Her eyes got wide. She was a Ruiz Cabañas; they never got candy because their families didn’t visit. She couldn’t resist.
“What are you doing, Jessica?” Velia asked. I ignored her and offered Cecilia more. Her face and fingers were stained with chocolate.

“Stop it, Jessica!” Velia screamed. “She’s going to die!” Velia ran out of the room to get a maestra while I watched Cecilia eat the last one.

Velia confessed everything. Later, as the mastermind, I was taken to the psychiatrist.

“How did you feel when Cecilia ate those cucarachas?” the doctor asked.

“Happy,” I replied.

The maestras moved Cecilia out of our room before supper. And for me, there were consequences. They forced me to stay after chapel to pray for forgiveness. They even canceled the visits with my father. But the worst thing was that I was not allowed to see Velia. Even though she tattled, I wasn’t mad. She was my life.

Looking back, I know what I did was wrong. I was lonely and mad about the unfairness of that place. We all were. But when the maestras labeled Cecilia too sick to be accountable for anything in her life, they hurt her too. They regarded all of us with contempt, but they treated Cecilia as if she weren’t even there. I like to think that, in holding her responsible, I was treating her like one of us, like another human being.

After the incident, I spent my evenings lying in Bed 232, looking out the window. I knew that one day, I’d have my own children and would tell them they were good kids — something Velia, Cecilia and I never heard at El Instituto. — Jessica P. as told to Cynthia Augustin, New York Times

C. Analyze the story using the four essential tools of analysis. Write your answers on notebook paper.
   a. Passion - What subject does Jessica take seriously? How do you know?
   b. Ideas - What does Jessica consider and discuss? What are her claims?
   c. Structure - How does Jessica map this out? Is it chronological?
   d. Authority - What gives Jessica the ‘right’ to talk about this topic?
D. Review what you’ve written during and find a way to revise it to make one of these elements stronger.
   a. Do you need to include a sentence/paragraph that shows your authority to write on the topic?
   b. Do you need to restructure it so it makes sense chronologically or include a flashback?
   c. Can you clarify your idea?
   d. Maybe look back at the prompt and make sure you fully responded to it. Does the reader feel that this is important to you, that you have a passion for it?

Activity 4: Reflection - You have been an amazing student! Here are a few questions to answer as this unit comes to a close:
   A. What three lessons or things this week do you remember the most?
   B. What lessons did you find difficult this week or what questions do you still have from this week?