

# TURNING POINTS

## NARRATIVE ESSAY – 200 POINTS TOTAL

Paul Logan’s “Zero” is a **narrative** essay that describes a specific turning point in his life—the moment he realized that he needed to devote more time to his studies. Over the next few weeks, you will be reading several **narrative** essays. These essays still adhere to the basic academic **essay structure**, but they mainly rely on anecdotes as support, and they usually incorporate clear and vivid **description**. In other words, these **narrative** essays *show* the reader details to support the thesis rather than *telling* the reader why the thesis is correct.

For this assignment, you will write a **narrative** essay that details a turning point in your life. You will use descriptive detail to show your readers the significance of the turning point. In order to effectively support your thesis, you will need to write a well-organized, detailed narrative that is clear, meticulous, and compelling.

### OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Throughout the writing process, you will be required to turn in various drafts of parts of the essay, including thesis statements, paragraphs, etc. All of these drafts are required. Failure to submit complete, MLA formatted versions these drafts will result in an automatic deduction of 10 points per missing or incomplete draft. In other words, each draft you don’t submit will take away from the 200 points possible for this essay assignment.
- All drafts—rough *and* final—must be a minimum of 2 pages, have an introduction and conclusion, and be written in [MLA format](#) in order to be considered complete.

### TIPS

- There have, undoubtedly, been many turning points in your life. Do not feel pressured to find the perfect topic or to write about the most important moment you’ve ever experienced. Use our in-class brainstorming activity to help identify an appropriate topic.
- The turning point you choose to write about should take place over a short timespan—five minutes or less. Do not try to write about your entire drive to Oklahoma, or all of the events leading up to your high school graduation. An “A” paper will focus on a very specific moment, such as the moment you lost your first spelling bee, or seeing your 4.0 report card. Focusing on a short action will allow you to expand on the important details and images that will clearly show the reader what your ritual is about.
- Review *Viewpoints* Chapters 1 and 2 if you are unclear about how to craft a **thesis statement**, **topic sentences**, or **paragraphs** with **supporting detail** that is on-topic. Remember that even a narrative essay must have a thesis statement, and paragraphs must also each have a controlling idea/**topic sentence** that guides the content of the **paragraph**.
- Write in your own unique **voice** carefully consider your **tone**. While all academic writing needs to be clear and grammatically correct, you should always aim to write works that distinctively sound like you.

### DUE DATES

Please see the [Reading and Assignment Schedule](#) for due dates for all drafts.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes of this essay assignment and the related in-class activities are as follows:

1. Writers will craft a clear, specific thesis.
2. Writers will create paragraphs with clear controlling ideas.
3. Writers will create paragraphs that stay on topic.
4. Writers will illustrate actions, images, and other important details clearly and vividly.
5. Writers will refine grammatical and mechanical skills including basic sentence structure and punctuation.

This list of outcomes closely resembles the criteria on the rubric for your final draft. Your grade will be determined by your ability to meet the expectations listed above, so you should keep them in mind as you write and revise.