DEFINITION OF NARRATIVE WRITING

NARRATIVE WRITING relates a clear sequence of events that occurs over time. Both what happens and the order in which the events occur are communicated to the reader. Effective narration requires a writer to give a clear sequence of events (fictional or non-fictional) and to provide elaboration.

NARRATIVE PROMPT

Think of a time when all of the attention has been focused on you or someone else. Using precise details, write a story about what happened.
NARRATIVE MODE

LEVEL I – Does not meet standard

1. Paper #9912777

This brief Level I response shows little attention to topic development. The writing addresses the correct prompt (I remember when all the attention was focused on me) but displays little sense of audience and purpose. Limited and general events (flipped my four wheeler, everyone around me, people asking if I was OK, cars stopping) occur within a vaguely defined time frame. Some errors in mechanics and sentence formation do not halt the flow of communication. Overall, this response indicates little understanding of the assigned narrative task.

2. Paper #9906698

The writer of this Level I response demonstrates no real understanding of the narrative writing task. Instead the response is a list of various occasions when “all the attention was focused on one person.” This approach lacks a story form and no sequencing. There is no evidence of organization as the writer moves from one brief mention of a scenario to the next without pausing to add support. The overuse of sentence fragments is distracting but does not significantly halt the flow of communication.

3. Paper #9922089

This response indicates little understanding of the narrative task. Instead, the writer provides some observations about getting attention but overlooks the need to develop a story. The writing does not establish an appropriate time or place, and there is no movement through time in a chronological sense. Ideas seem to be irrelevant due to their vagueness and/or weak connection to the writing task (attention is something that is hard to do). Also, the response shows little sense of audience and minimal author involvement.

4. Paper #9940025

The writer begins this fairly sustained response with an acknowledgment of being the center of attention on numerous occasions. However, the response indicates little understanding of the assigned narrative task. The writing is expository (I’m a guy that loves to have fun and make people laugh; a presentation requires everyone’s attention to learn something new about a particular subject), which does not lend itself to a story form. Although there is some evidence of an organizational plan in placing information where it fits, the writer does not create a storyline of events that happen sequentially. Therefore, the response demonstrates little attention to topic development in the assigned mode.
I remember when all the attention was focused on me. That was the time I flipped my hair for the first time. Everyone was around me, people were looking at me and I was, you know. Cars were stopping so I felt like the attention was all on me.
BEGIN TO WRITE HERE

ONE TIME I REMEMBER THAT ALL THE ATTENTION WAS FOCUSED ON ONE PERSON WAS AT A GAME, A BASKETBALL GAME WHERE SOMEONE IS AT THE FREE THROW LINE GETTING HIS FOUL SHOTS. WHEN THE GAME IS REALLY TIGHT. AT A FOOTBALL GAME WHERE THE KICKER IS TRYING TO MAKE THE WINNING FIELD GOAL, OR WHEN A FOOTBALL TEAM TRIES TO SCORE A TOUCHDOWN WITH MINUTES LEFT IN THE GAME.

IN A BASEBALL GAME WHERE THE GAME HAS WENT INTO EXTRA INNINGS, ON THE PITCHER WHEN THE GAME WAS WON & HE HAD TO FINISH THE GAME, IN CLASS WHERE THE TEACHER IS TALKING. ONE TIME ON TV WHERE A MAN WAS ON A MOTORCYCLE AND WAS JUMPING OFF BIG RAMPS, AT THE SLAM DUNK CONTEST WHERE NATE ROBINSON & DWIGHT HOWARD COMPETED.

WHEN THE STEELERS BEAT CARDINALS IN THE LAST SUPER BOWL, WHEN THEY HAD THE INAUGURATION FOR OBAMA, WHEN I GO TO CHURCH EVERY SUNDAY MORNING ALL THE ATTENTION IS PUT ON THE SPEAKER, WHEN OBAMA ANNOUNCED THE STIMULUS BILL ON TV.
I have seen a lot of my friends get a lot of attention, a lot of people get my attention. Some people have good attention, and some people have bad attention. Sometimes I get all my friends' attention but sometimes they do not want to be talked to at the time. Sometimes it is hard to get people's attention. Sometimes I do not like it when they get my attention. Attention is something that is hard to get. Some people like attention all the time. I like attention at the end of the day.
There have been numerous occasions where I have been the center of attention. Whether it’s having fun joking around with a couple of friends, presenting a presentation in class, voicing my opinion on what’s right or wrong, even things that are just simple. This includes much of the following: the clothes I wear, my eating habits, choice of music, the way I perform in certain sports, and just altogether, my personality.

The reason to my first answer, joking around with my friends, would in detail be that I’m a guy that loves to have fun and make people laugh so that we can all get through the day with a feeling of life is not a joke, but why does that we can’t at least enjoy it while we have it? I feel that everyday must include every living being to smile whether they're in pain, stressed, depressed, or their day just isn’t going well. Everyday is a day to laugh, and if a joke does the trick then I'm full of them.

A presentation requires everyone’s attention to learn something new about a particular subject. I’m very confident when I’m in front of my peers, example my history presentation on Abraham Lincoln. I had everyone’s attention, spoke clearly even added a couple jokes to make it interesting to everyone listening.

Voicing my opinion on things requires a listener. I have a tendency to speak up for myself and others that’s just me, my personality. If something is wrong like someone saying my friends or picking on someone.
That's when I step in to let the person know, Hey, what you're doing isn't right, or when someone does good I commend them.

I stand out almost everywhere I go. I love attention that is positive. I was raised to speak up, stand out, not be a follower but a tour guide, making everyone follow and listen to me.
NARRATIVE MODE

LEVEL II – Does not meet standard

1. Paper #9947662

This Level II response shows some understanding of the narrative writing task. Most of the first half sets up an afternoon when the writer enjoyed a lot of attention on a birthday. The writing goes on to extend each previ ewed event within a storyline (when we went to the skating rink, people greeted us; I had so much fun.) The minimally developed narrative sequence shows some evidence of an organizational plan. The writer uses basic-functional vocabulary (nice, fine, happier, tired) and simple sentence patterns. The response needs more sustained development with precise, meaningful word choice to achieve a higher score.

2. Paper #9940253

This response addresses the narrative task with a sequence of what happened when the writer was at a job interview. Mixed in with the story is some expository information (he also explained that the part time workers are the ones to put batteries in cars; that’s how all the attention was on me). Therefore the response remains minimally developed for the narrative task. Through the use of basic transitions (first thing, secondly, thirdly, in conclusion), the writing displays some evidence of an organizational plan. Overall, the response indicates only some understanding of writing in the narrative mode.

3. Paper #9936800

The writer of this minimally developed response displays some understanding of the narrative task by recounting events on a birthday. Some organization is evident in the use of basic transitions (then, that place, after that), although ideas remain loosely organized in places. The basic-functional vocabulary used to convey the writer’s feelings (so much fun, best food ever, enjoyable) limits the development of the narrative sequence. The writing shows some sense of audience by including a few specific details (tons of rides like Goliath and my favorite Batman; this amazing place called Lightning Strikes). However, the writer rushes through too many events to achieve the sufficient development required for a higher score.

4. Paper #9945209

In this Level II response, the writer demonstrates more author involvement than author control. As the writer recounts a time of reciting a poem in class, there is some information that needs further clarification in its connection to the story (things showed up that I couldn’t possibly imagine). The storyline does show some sequencing; however, some ideas remain loosely organized, which is particularly noticeable in the confusing conclusion (if I had to choose attention would be the last thing I would go through because things come out better than you thought they would). Some errors in mechanics, grammar and usage, and sentence formation are obvious, but do not halt communication.
One afternoon me and my friends went out for my birthday. We went to the movies, walked around the mall, went out to eat, and went to the skating rink. I had so much fun. Everyone was watching me and my friends like we were celebrities or something. I really enjoyed the attention. I got many presents. Everyone was nice. The day went just fine. As we were walking around the mall people were speaking. When we bought our tickets for the movies the people were nice. When we ate the waiters were nice, they sung happy birthday to me. When we went to the skating rink people greeted us. I had so much fun. My friends were there to make this day happier. This is a day that I will always remember. When I went home I was so happy and tired that I just layed down and went to sleep. This day was perfect. No arguments or nothing. I wished I could replay it and watch the day of my happy birthday.
A time when all the attention was focused on me was about a week ago. I was at a job interview. The job I applied for was Autozone. The majority of the time I was the center of attention. The other times I was getting told guide lines for the job.

First thing that happened when I entered the office of the manager he just glanced at my appearance. Then he went over the guide lines for your appearance at work. He told me that I had to wear black dress pants, red colored shirt, black shoes and there could be no earrings or visible tattoos, then we moved on to another subject. That's the first thing we went over.

Secondly we talked about how things work at the store. I got told that everybody has their own job to do, but everything is based on team work. He also explained that the part time workers are the ones to put batteries in cars, install headlights, windshield wipers etc. Also the worst part is you have to do it in all weather, rain, sleet or snow. That's the second thing we went over.

Thirdly we went over some references. My references were not good enough and I only wrote down one. Your limited on who you can put down. So I had to give him a call and give him someone. I used one of my teachers as one and a best friend's grand-mother. That's what happened third.

In conclusion all the attention was on me at a job interview due to my appearance, getting explained to about how things work at the work place. And asked about my references. That's how all the attention was on me.
It was my birthday and we went to Six Flags. It was so fun and exciting, we went to all kinds of rides. The people there kept on telling me happy birthday also. I had so much fun that day. I wish I could go back to that time again. We went on tons of rides like Goliath and my favorite Batman. Then we went and ate at Red Lobster. That place has the best food ever. I got a shrimp and steak dinner. It was one of the best meals I ever had. After that we went riding in the car and just listening to music. That was also enjoyable because we had some good music playing while we were riding. We found this amazing place called Lightning Strikes. It was a cool place where you could play bowling and eat a nice dinner. We didn’t eat though because we already ate. We played about three games and then we next to go home. I took a nap on the way back because we had to ride a long way and plus, it was about ten o’clock too. When I got home, I cleaned up and thought about how fun of a birthday I had. It was the best birthday I ever had.
Do you know the feeling of being the attention of the day or hour? Well, let me just say it’s not a good feeling. One Friday in Mrs. class we had to read a poem. First, we had to think of a good or bad time and write about it. Before we knew it time was up, and it was the first one to read it. I was so nervous, I started sweating, shaking, and blushing. But I read it and it wasn’t as bad. Then I thought I was about to pass out, it seemed like a while. I realized most people were talking about it and didn’t care. They were all over the room, here and there, left to right. It seemed like the world was about to end. But my thought all those things happen. I made it through. It was like driving a new car and not getting a ticket. So to this day I was writing if I should to those. Attention would be the last thing I would go through because things come out better than you thought they would.
NARRATIVE MODE

LEVEL III – Meets standard

1. Paper #9940964

This focused Level III response displays a clear sequence of events with adequate details to provide sufficient development, demonstrating a good understanding of the narrative task. From the suspenseful beginning through relevant details about the rain to the car crash and its aftermath, the writer is in control of the narrative pace. Word choice is precise and meaningful (it was like God just dropped a bucket of water down, or like we were flowers and He was watering us). Sentence structures are varied and interesting, which strengthens the smooth flow of clear ideas. A good organizational strategy contributes to the sense of completeness as the writer successfully unifies the foreshadowed dramatic life change with the closing observations (…all eyes on me; not a very good way to have it; but to know I was loved and cared about meant the world).

2. Paper #9940775

This response shows a good understanding of the narrative task by providing a clear sequence of events without wandering from the main idea (all eyes on ______ giving a speech). Author control is evident in the step-by-step progression of the story line as the student is called up to the stage, gives the speech, and goes back to her seat. Embellishing these events are relevant descriptions of the student’s emotions, enhanced by precise, meaningful word choice (I could feel their eyes beating straight through me; the pressure seemed to retreat more and more as I neared the end of my speech). Minor errors in mechanics do not hinder communication. Varied sentence structure helps to present ideas clearly, and the response has enough sufficient development to achieve a sense of completeness.

3. Paper #9952325

The writer of this sufficiently developed response presents a clear narrative sequence about giving a school presentation. This recounting of the writer’s change from nervous to confident combines effective paragraphing with varied transitional elements (I started off, after I began the second half, when I got about halfway through, after everyone had completed). This organizational strategy contributes both to fluency and overall coherence, which reflects good author control. Consistently precise and meaningful vocabulary displays author involvement (other people made me think, “Hey, I should have done something like that. That was clever.”) There are no extraneous or irrelevant details in this response, which demonstrates a good understanding of the assigned writing task.
In this Level III response, the writer displays a good understanding of the narrative writing task by relating what happened as she sang at her grandfather’s birthday. Precise word choice (“wing it,” anxiously waiting, eye contact) helps create sufficient development. Ideas proceed smoothly and logically within an established time frame. A sense of completeness is evident as the writer ties the conclusion to the opening remarks (I didn’t have that much time to practice, and I don’t do well with last minute preparations…this time I know to better prepare myself, so I won’t have to go through this again).
I woke up today, with the mindset that everything was going to be exactly how it was everyday. I'd wake up, go to school, then off to work. Well, today wasn't; today would dramatically change my life forever.

A big rain storm had settled in that morning. It was like God just dropped a bucket of water down, or like we were flowers and he was watering us. Well what I'm saying is, the rain wasn't stopping anytime soon. I was late for school; I kept thinking, "Oh, I can't be late, mom's gonna be so mad if I'm late again." So I hurried.

It was very difficult to see, just sheets and sheets of rain. But, I couldn't slow down, oh no I wasn't about to be late. So I speed up, that was the mistake, my brakes failed. I felt as if I was flying. I couldn't think fast enough to react. All I could do was grip the wheel. Then I hit it, on big old oak tree. The rest I didn't remember, but what I was told scared me.

Well I was rushed to the hospital.
I had broken my back, and could probably never walk again. This was terribly scary to me.

My mom came in, she told me the whole family was here, and all my friends. This made me feel good. I was just thinking that you stopped there normal busy lives to come be here, at this horrible place with me? It made me feel like a queen. To feel so loved and cared about like that was amazing.

Its been a few months now, and I'm fine. But what amazed me was how people made you or anyone at that the center of the universe when you in need.

So that was when I read all attention, all eyes on me. Not a very good way to have it, but to know I was loved and cared about meant the world.
As I was preparing myself for the public speech I had been chosen to make, I felt the realization of the matter hit me. I just now understood that I would not be presenting my speech to only my few club members but, instead, to the entire school. I thought of all the many different things that could go wrong. The problem was, it was too late.

Mr. _____ my principal had just called my name. It was time.

All the attention was on me as I walked to the stage. I could feel their eyes beating straight through me. My words were simple yet had great meaning to them. Half way threw my speech I realized I had made it to the stage and started my speech without falling, tripping, stumbling, rambling, nor any other embarrassing accident.

The pressure seemed to retreat more and more as I neared the end of my speech. I had made it to the last sentence without any problems. I could hear myself think “ok, last sentence. Don’t mess up now.”
Despite all the fear I had about the last sentence, I remained calm and cruised through the last sentence.

My speech was over and I had managed to do it without any mishaps. I felt the need to dash for the stairs but I didn't. I kept my composure and walked off stage. As I walked back through the massive crowd, I got many “great job” and “you were great” comments. I was very pleased with myself. I felt a sense of peace come to me as I took my seat in the back.
I can remember a time when everyone's attention was focused on me. I had to give a presentation about space. I had to tell about the history of space travel and study. I started off by talking about people who had traveled to space. I was really nervous. My voice was shaky and I stammered a few times. The presentation was really long and so it seemed to me. There were some parts where I missed the words and other parts were I did really well.

After I began the second half of the presentation, I had become used to it and wasn't that nervous any more. My voice had become clearer and the words flowed from my mouth as smooth as peanut butter. I felt more confident with myself. I wasn't trembling and surety like I was before.

When I got about halfway through the second part of the presentation I thought to myself, "This is really fun. I could do this all day." Before I knew it, the presentation was finished. I had to go sit down and listen to the next person. Watching some of the other students show their presentation I didn't feel so bad. Other people made me think, "Hey, I should have done something like that. That was clever."

After everyone had completed showing their presentation, the teacher said that we all did an excellent job. This made me feel good. I was proud of myself. So remember this; giving a speech or presentation can be nerve-racking at first, but after a while you may like it and possibly get a case that involves giving speeches and presentations.
It was my grandad’s big birthday celebration, and I had to sing a solo. I must admit, I have a great voice, but I didn’t have that much time to practice, and I don’t do well with last minute preparations, but this time I had to “wing it.” My whole family was there, and no way was I going to mess up. The preacher was still preaching, and I was up next. I was anxiously waiting in my seat for my turn. I was so terrified, that every bone in my body began to tremble. All of a sudden I heard, “We will now have a selection sung by Miss.” Announced the MC. I thought my heart was going to give out. As I slowly made my body to the front, I felt hundreds of eyes look my way. That’s the worst feeling in the world. I finally made it to the piano. The pianist, also known as my aunt, softly spoke, “Don’t worry about the crowd, just sing your heart out.” So I took a deep breath, grabbed the microphone, and the song came flowing out of my mouth like a river. As I was singing, I made a couple of eye contact with my relatives. Some were smiling, some were crying, some were even speechless because they had no idea I could sing. As I
saw the crowd’s reaction, that made things a little better. Before I knew it, it was the end of the song. I had a standing ovation. I was ecstatic, yet relieved. The celebration was over. I had heard so many hugs and kisses in my life. Everywhere I turned I had to say “thank you” or “I appreciate it.” It all really turned out good. I even had a few invitations to sing at someone’s church, a ball game, and a ceremony. This time I know to better prepare myself, so I won’t have to go through this again.
NARRATIVE MODE

LEVEL IV – Exceeds standard

1. Paper #9940163

This fully developed response clearly demonstrates a thorough understanding of the assigned narrative task. Employing effective character description, the writer displays strong author control in foreshadowing the impact of such a personality (I had no idea my bubbly personality would get me into something, even I didn’t think I could handle). Coupled with this strong control is a strong sense of audience, evident in the relevant connection of events to the writer’s physical presence (I sat in the back pew with all of the bad kids; I started crying and ran off stage; my director ran backstage and confronted me). The successful use of natural sounding dialogue, along with varied transitions and sentence structures, contributes to the smooth sequencing of events and flow of ideas. Vivid and precise vocabulary strengthen development, and there is a satisfying sense of resolution and completeness in the conclusion (that night I was the star for once, and I found my hidden talent).

2. Paper #9940151

This Level IV response begins with a clear tone of excitement and suspense (it was near the end of the game and all eyes were on me.) The writer develops an effectively sequenced story of this game, employing appropriate dialogue and building suspense, to advance the action to the final outcome. Details are thoroughly developed through purposeful word choice (we’re practicing today, preparing for tomorrow; I made sure that every play I was hustling; I started sprinting toward our goal). Coherence is evident as the final observation alludes to the suspense of the beginning (this game was exciting, but I hope I never had to withstand that much pressure again), showing strong author control. The writing exhibits a thorough understanding of the narrative task.

3. Paper #9935695

The distinctive elements of this Level IV response are the rich, thorough development, a strong sense of audience and purpose, and a strong but subtle organizational strategy. Vivid details of the thorough elaboration are plentiful as the writer describes an encounter with Babe Ruff and the ensuing chase of terror (as his beady, little eyes were fixed upon me … he seemed to be ominously gliding over the earth; I swiftly hit him in the chest, shoving him away with a force that can only be obtained with the aid of adrenaline). The writing clearly exhibits a strong sense of audience and purpose in the effective use of sensory details that convey the writer’s change from desperation to peace (all my fear, confusion, and panic evaporated, but left me exhausted with a gentle throb in my heart and veins). The writer skillfully handles the twists and turns of the five-minute chase, building to the moment when “the world swirled around me back to a familiar reality.” All of these features demonstrate an exceptional understanding of the narrative task.
In this Level IV response about arriving late for school, the writer provides clear and specific details (wake me from my drowsy haze; shaggy, sandy-colored mutt; my cheeks turned crimson) that successfully address and control the narrative task. The writing displays a strong sense of audience through the humorous, colloquial tone, and the use of drama-producing dialogue (“Mom, watch out!” I shrieked … she swerved and we just barely missed the fortunate mutt. “Oh my Lord. Scared me to death, nearly gave me a heart attack, I swear!” she exhaled). This humor also contributes to the overall sense of completeness reflected in the lie told to cover the writer’s tardiness. The ending, in which the teacher’s comment and eye contact reveal he doesn’t believe it, flows smoothly and logically from the skillful depiction of amusing characters caught in a humiliating situation. Minor errors in mechanics and sentence formation do not hinder communication in this thoroughly developed response.
There have been many times in my life, where I have felt like everyone's full attention was on me. One particular time stands out in my mind.

I have always been the one to speak out and let my voice be heard, but I had no idea my bubbly personality would get me into something I didn't think I could handle.

I remember it like it was yesterday. I was the spunky, loud, confident, eight-year-old that sat in the back pew with all of the bad kids. I never really managed to stand in my church's annual Christmas pageant, but this year my talent was revealed. Every Wednesday, at choir practice, I would belt every word to every song as loud as I could, just to get the room laughing. One Wednesday, my choir director pulled me aside and said, "I don't know if this is just a joke to you, but honey, you've got talent." For a moment my head went completely blank. I realized that made it out of my mouth was, "Really?" "Yes, sweetie," she replied, "For such a young age, your voice is amazing!"

I looked down and smiled. She then went on to persuade me to take the lead role in the pageant, as Mary.

Even though I let no one know, I was ecstatic about my part! I couldn't wait until my big night. Every day, I would go home and practice. I sang to my parents, my dogs in the shower.
the mirror, and in the car; I was not going to let anyone down.

Finally, it was here. The night I had been looking forward to all winter. As the last sheep and wise men took the stage, I was getting more nervous as each second went by. I said to myself, "This is it!"

I took the stage and took one last peek at the three hundred people in the audience, and I froze up. Everyone was watching me, waiting for my "spectacular performance. I opened my nervous mouth, and nothing but a whimper came out. I was petrified. I started crying and ran off stage. I knew I had let everyone down. I had the worst feeling; I had no clue what I was supposed to do.

A few minutes passed, and I finally started to breathe again. My director ran backstage and comforted me. She let me know everyone was nervous, even her. I decided to go back out and show them the star I knew I was.

I walked slowly back on stage as my audience clapped and cheered for me. I closed my eyes and started singing. I got a feeling I had never had before, like I was a big star in Hollywood or something. As my song went on, everyone got into it. People stood and clapped along with me; I knew everything was perfect now.

As I ended my song, the claps and cheers were so loud, I didn't even hear myself singing. That night, I was the star for once, and I found my hidden talent.
It was near the end of the game and all eyes were on me. It was the championship basketball game, and the score was 56-50 in favor of the opposing team (the Wildcats). With time running out and me as the captain of the team, I knew the game was in my hands. The clock ticked "3...2...1..."
And the final buzzer sounded. This is a time where all eyes were on me.

February 24th, 2009—was the day our game was scheduled. Our team had spent weeks practicing and preparing for this day. Everyday, I would tell us, "We're practicing today, preparing for tomorrow."

So! February 24th arrived and we were told that we would be playing the Wildcats for the 5A State Championship. Immediately, our faces dropped and our youngest player, stated "But they haven't lost a game all year,"

"Well, they will tonight," a voice from behind the wall of the locker room said, "they may be bigger, faster, more talented, but I promise you, they are not more determined than we are." Tracy said this with pride, then walked to the middle of the locker room and put my hand in the air. The team swarmed me, clapping their hands and getting fired up for our game. "On three! One, two, three, Go HORNETS!" we shouted and sprinted to the court to get warmed up...

"Berp!" and the game began. With the ball in my hand, I dribbled down the court and made moves to my team mates and shot when I could. It was

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a close game and the team, crowd, and coach seemed to be depending on me to play the game of my life. So I did. I made sure that every play I was hustling and anytime I could shoot, I was. In the fourth quarter it was 66-66, and it was our ball. I shot the ball and missed; so the Wildcats got the rebound and ran to make a shot. So I ran to the other side and fouled the girl who was shooting. This disappointed everyone, especially my coach. The girl made one free-throw, and then it was our ball. The score was now 67-66 and there was 5 seconds left. My team mates threw the ball in to me and I started sprinting toward our goal. I could feel the pressure of everyone in the gym. I had 25 points, 7 rebounds, and six assists, but that meant nothing if I missed this shot. From the distance I heard coach yell, "SHOOT!"

So I did; the buzzer sounded.

The pressure was on me. I had to make the shot to win. The ball went in and the crowd roared. My team mates ran to the court and lifted me on their shoulders. I had won the game! Afterwards, I was awarded MVP (Most Valuable Player) and an Outstanding Leadership Award. This game was exciting, but I hope I never have to withstand that much pressure again!
I stepped out of my car and made my way into the baseball stadium. My family and I were following our tradition of attending the Fourth of July baseball game of the Birmingham Barons. Only this Independence Day held an event that I will never forget. I had passed the first set of gates that one passes in order to enter the stadium. I was caught up in the feeling one always gets at a baseball game: the smell of hot dogs, Cracker Jacks, and sunscreen permeated the air around me. The stadium was filled with people laughing and chatting, and the baseball announcer's booming voice informed me that the game was about to begin. As I was caught up in these familiar mashes of feelings, however, I noticed a movement out of my peripheral vision. I swiveled my line of vision and found myself staring at the Barons' mascot, Babe Ruff. I didn't realize the anxiety that followed, all of time seemed to slow down. As his beady, little eyes were fixed upon me, he mechanically and absurdly started to walk in order to approach me. As he was closing in upon me, I began to be anxiously gliding over the earth, as opposed to taking actual steps, I tried to ignore him and the gloom that was weighing over me, consuming me. I even gave up that attempt when he proceeded to open his arms sideways, asking me for an embrace. At that moment, all the fear and power that I had been containing broke loose and I desperately tried to get away from him. It seemed as though I couldn't get away fast enough. Gravity and time were working against me, pulling me back like I was walking in water. No matter how hard I tried and how many turns I took away from Babe Ruff, he always seemed to be in hot pursuit of me. I cried out to everyone around me, hoping to discourage the maniac behind the mask as Babe Ruff. Yet, no one seemed to comprehend what I was saying, and I realized I was literally alone in my plight. The masses of people outside of the stadium gave me blank stares as I sprinted away from the mascot, as if I had lost my mind. They did not seem to care that some lunatic was pursuing me. It was like a nightmare.
could not wake up from, an alternate universe I couldn't escape. But they caught up with me. He attempted to wrap his arms around me, I swiftly hid him in the chest, slowing him away, with a force that can only be obtained with the aid of adrenaline. The air escaped his lungs yet he still managed to speak. He whispered, "Oh, come on." The new adrenaline that was released by my panic rushed through my veins and swirled around my head. I broke the spell that time and gravity had put on me before. I no longer had a problem sleeping away from Babu Bu'ak and dwelling behind any object or person, so that he could not catch me. This was not necessary, however, because much to my horror and amazement, my mother was SPEAKING WITH HIM! I was flabbergasted. The event was incomprehensible to every ounce of logic I contained. But I did not have time to be confused because my mother then turned towards me and informed me that the man behind the mask was one of my friends from school. She had just put up a beacon well that I found myself colliding with. All my fear, confusion, and panic evaporated, but left me exhausted with a gentle throb in my heart and veins. The world swirled around me back to a familiar rhythm. I slowly approached my old foe and heard a familiar laugh. I disregarded the mask, for I knew that laugh: it was the laugh of my friend. The still frozen witness's aged as I embraced my friend on an easy hug. I soon joined in with my family and friend's laughter. The five-minute chase that seemed to have lasted a lifetime drew to a close. But that peculiar event that took place on a familiar day of tradition will never be able to be forgotten by me. Though it once racked my core, it now fills me with laughter. Indeed, I will never be able to forget those five minutes.
Buzz buzz buzz, my alarm clock sang out.
I wanted to hurl it off the top of the Sears building for interrupting my blissful slumber. I groaned heavily and reluctantly peeled the covers off inch by inch. The steamy shower helped to wake me from my dreamy haze and unwhit the numerous thongs I had developed due mainly to stress. I tumbled quickly, dressed hastily, and mowed my way into the passenger seat of the Tahoe.

"Running late honey?" mom commented while giving me a judgmental scan.

"Yeah, how could you tell?" I asked back sarcastically.

"Well, your hair is sopping wet, you'll catch a cold!"
She replied in a maternal tone.

I was just about to tell her not to worry over me when something in the road captured my attention.

It was a shaggy, sandy colored mutt, and we were barreling our way towards it like a freight train. Mom was distracted making a god awful attempt at singing ABDC's "Back in Black."

"Mom, watch out!" I shrieked and pointed in the general direction she swerved and we just barely missed the fortunate mutt.

"Oh my Lord, saved me too, didn't nearly gave me a heart attack, I swear!" she exclaimed, relieved was obvious upon her once panic-stricken face.

"Please just keep your eyes on the road mom, I nearly hit myself, I think maybe I did. I may need to go check." I joked lightly. She chuckled at that, then returned to scanning through the radio stations.
I made it too school a hint after the bell rang, and when
Mr. asked why I was tiddy for his class aye eyes
were on me. A bead of sweat trickled down my forehead.
My throat became dry like the desert prairies, and when
I tried to speak, I sounded like a babbling imbissel. When
attention is directed towards me I go completely blank,
my cheeks flush scarlet, and my legs turn numb
and crawl-like so I cant just make a mad dash.
"Well?" he raised his own little brows and tapped his foot
to indicate his impatience.
Again I tried to speak but no words came. Eyes
of all my peers bored through me like a murderer on trial.
They all waited amused but I didnt find this funny one
bit. I felt like my stomach was going to spew from
my mouth-which reminded me of my cavernous
belly, while running bale I hadn't made time for.
Brains: fluffy, golden pincushions. I felt saliva begin to form
in my mouth. Just from the thought and that's when
a monstrous growl answered for me.
Rawr, rawr, rawr, it went on and on for what seemed like
an eternity. The entire class erupted into a roar of laughter.
My cheeks turned crimson... Utter humiliation swept
through me.
"Dog, there was a dog in the road, and we hit the poor critter."
I mumbled the lie, and propped Mr. Heel. For it.
"Really, well you should have eaten it if you seem hungry." His
beddy eyes bore through mine and thats when I knew he didn't believe