

Autobiographical Incident Guidelines and Annotations

Here are some guidelines and an example of a good autobiographical incident.

Click each guideline to see how it works in the example essay.

An autobiographical incident essay

- ¥ focuses on one event that has meaning for the writer
- ¥ places the incident in context by giving details about the setting and the people involved
- ¥ develops the incident with specific details
- ¥ explains the meaning of the incident to the writer
- ¥ organizes details in a way that makes sense

Annotations

- ¥ The writer uses an attention-grabbing quotation as her introduction.
- ¥ The writer places the incident in context. The paper includes details about the setting and about the puppy Annie.
- ¥ The writer develops the incident with specific details. These include sensory details, dialogue, narrative details, and thoughts and feelings.
- ¥ The writer explains the meaning of the incident. She learned that real giving sometimes involves pain.
- ¥ The writer organizes details in chronological, or time, order. Phrases such as "it was my eighth birthday" and "when I was twelve years old" help readers to follow the time order.
- ¥ The writer has chosen words, events, and details that reveal her personality. The writing flows naturally.