

Fenn Memoir

Memories of a Fenn Experience



Memoir (from French: **mémoire**: memoria, meaning memory or reminiscence), is a literary nonfiction genre. More specifically, it is a collection of memories that an individual writes about moments or events, both public or private that took place in the author's life.

Leaving Fenn or even just moving on to high school is a major transition in life—and one worth remembering with a lasting memoir that will bring back the joys, triumphs, setbacks and fullness of your time at Fenn. For your final assessment in English, I am asking your to write a “memoir” of your Fenn experience and to present your memoir in video and written form.

I want to give you as much freedom to create the memoir as possible, but I also want to have some guidelines that we all follow. Please read this carefully and studiously.

Guidelines:

- The memoir should reflect on your time at Fenn—but not on a specific event; rather, on a relatively few events that shaped your time at Fenn.

- The memoir should include reflections on some of the people who helped guide and mentor you—both teachers and friends.
- The final product must be created in both video and written form and posted to a special weebly site I have created for these video memoirs.
- You may use iMovie or an Adobe Voice Video to tell your story.
- The minimum length is 1000 words or eight minutes. There is no maximum length.
- It **must** be posted before the exam. Last year several people waited until the last minute, much to their frustration and exasperation. I can help you every step of the way, but not if you procrastinate.

Suggestions for writing:

- Start writing right away. Get down as much as you can. It is always easier to get rid of stuff than create it. Ideally, you will finish the writing part before the long weekend, so you can worry about the video over the weekend.
- Your progress this week is part of your grade.
- It can be written as a personal essay or as a narrative or slam-style poem.

Suggestions for the video:

- Remember KISS (keep it simple, stupid)
- Your words are the most important piece of the pie; the video is a way to present your words in a container of beauty that will be shared with the Fenn community many years hence.
- If you are comfortable with iMovie, it offers more options than an Adobe Voice Video.
- The voice video is a simpler approach, and done well, they can be very moving—and they have templates already set up that you can use.
- Imovie allows for more creativity, the addition of actual video clips and manipulation of images. You can even include clips and audio from work you have already completed this year!
- The final choice is up to you. I honestly do not have a preference.

Is there a rubric?

- As much as I love my rubrics, you are not required to use a specific rubric. Many of your ideas are probably better than mine, and I consider you all fine writers with your own minds. As long as it is a memoir—a reflection and collection of your finest thoughts about your time at Fenn—it is fine with me.
- That said: The Personal Essay Rubric, The Personal Memoir Rubric, and The Slam Poem Rubric can give you a structure that you find helpful. All of these are on the Rubrics & Resources page on thecraftedword.org

Timeline:

- You have about one week's time to complete this project, which is a good chunk of time, but not a big chunk of time—and the chunk gets smaller every day.
- **Friday:** Submit a rough draft of your writing and ideas for video.
- **Weekend:** Finalize your writing piece and begin the video process.
- **Tuesday/Wednesday:** complete video.
- If you need it, I will be available Tuesday afternoon from 1:00-4:00 to help anyone who needs help finishing and uploading videos.

During the Exam Period:

- The time during exam period will be devoted to watching and commenting on each other's videos in supportive, substantial, and specific ways.
- I will give you a list of classmates you must comment on first before moving on.
- You are free to comment before the exam period as well if videos have been posted early.
- At the conclusion of the exam period, you will be asked to write a brief metacognition of this final exam experience.

Grading:

- **Rough writing draft: 20%**
- **Final Writing Piece: 30%**
- **Final Video: 30%**

- **Commenting and Metacognition: 20%**

I am looking forward to this. You have been an amazing class to teach and share the year with on so many different levels!

~Fitz