

## DEV 075 Sample Paragraph: Personal Narrative

### The Visit



While visiting my granddaughter in Florida last month, I noticed a change in my father. Dad is a grouch; he has been since he retired three years ago. He did not even want to go to Florida to visit Kelly, but I insisted, “You have to see your first great grandchild.” Begrudgingly, with his Archie Bunker disposition, he gave in. After arriving in Florida, we stayed at my son Doug’s home. In that week we shared together, Dad grew close to his family. We would sit around the kitchen table after dinner, playing monopoly; eating my spice cake, warm from the oven; and drinking hot coffee to ease the chill of Florida’s winter nights. Dad enjoyed his favorite things: mashed potatoes, poker, Pabst beer, and long talks with Doug. After everyone was asleep, I would lie awake, listening to the soft, muffled voices of my father and son talking through the night. As the days went by, Dad’s emotions began to show. He held his tiny great-granddaughter, gently snuggled to his chest, worrying if she was cold. I even saw him slide his arm around Mom. The old Dad was back! And again he was king, or head of the tribe as he would say. He was showing tenderness to Kelly, love to Mom, and acceptance to Doug. Dad was expressing emotions that had been hidden too long. The change in my father, one winter week in Florida, will always have an enduring place in my memory.

### A Most Embarrassing Moment



I’ll never forget the time I received my first traffic ticket. It happened on Christmas Eve at the busiest time of day. My mother, sister, and two sons were riding in the car with me, and we were on our way to a shopping mall. Mother was afraid we wouldn’t reach the department store before it closed, and my sons wanted to have a gift wrapped. I wondered how I was going to manage all of this. To add to my problems, the traffic was terrible; cars of all shapes and sizes seemed to be intentionally blocking my progress. I kept thinking to myself, “This car has to go faster,” while I pushed the accelerator toward the floor. I watched the speedometer zip to fifty-five miles per hour in a twenty-five mile zone. “So what,” I thought. “I’m almost at the mall.” Little did I know, however, that the police were waiting just around the corner for me. Their radar device had caught me speeding; my brief career as a race car driver was at an end. Embarrassed and angry at myself, I sat fuming in the police car for forty minutes as an officer wrote up a very expensive ticket. Afterwards it was too late to complete any of my errands, and I had to face four frowning passengers, who expressed negative opinions about my driving for a long time afterwards. Needless to say, that pale blue ticket will forever hold a spot in my memory.

## An Unusual Experiment



My first experiment with the supernatural backfired. It was 1:00 Saturday morning, and I was sitting with my daughter, Renee, watching TV and munching on popcorn. We were watching a weird movie about the supernatural called Power of the Unknown. After the movie was over, we started joking about the eerie voices and the horrid noises in the movie. I told Renee to knock on the wall to see if we could contact any ghosts, and when she did, something knocked back, right beside the chair Renee was sitting in. She jumped up and screeched. Thinking she was trying to scare me, I said, “Be quiet, Renee; it’s late.” She replied, “Mom, I didn’t make that noise.” Just then the knock came again, and this time it scared both of us. Right after that, we could hear someone laughing next door. What a relief to realize it was just the next door neighbor’s child, Michael, playing a joke on us. Having learned one lesson, Renee and I don’t knock on the neighbor’s wall anymore.



## The Great Funnel



One of my most unforgettable experiences was seeing a tornado. My husband and I had spent a day in Cincinnati and were on the way back to Dayton. It was an unusually hot day for the early spring. Later in the afternoon the temperature dropped, and a few dark clouds gathered. Then I saw the twister. The great funnel moved extremely fast and constantly changed its position and shape. First, it became tall and skinny, and later, it shrank back to a smaller size. Even though it must have been miles away from us, we could see the flying and swirling pieces of objects in the air. The twister lifted them up and threw them all over the countryside. Later that night we learned the tragic news about Xenia, Ohio. The swirling objects that we had seen were houses, roof tops, and cars. Today, when an announcement of a tornado warning is given, I search for a hiding place. Seeing the incredible power of the tornado made a believer out of me, and earned my everlasting respect.