

Personal Is Political Essay

Ta-Nahisi Coates's hybrid essay/memoir *Between the World and Me* uses personal experience in order to make a political point. In essence, Coates makes the personal political, a key tenet of identity politics movements regarding race, gender, sexuality, disability, etc... Coates also melds historical and contemporary research to persuade his readers about the importance of his personal experience. Coates's text makes a persuasive argument through research, personal anecdote, and experimental literary form (a letter to his son).

Drawing upon the strategies used by Coates, construct your own brief essay by melding personal anecdote with research in order to make a persuasive argument. I would encourage you to experiment with different strategies involving the rhetorical triangle (ethos, pathos, and logos) in constructing your argument. Also, feel free to use innovative literary forms in order to give your argument more power. In addition, you will want to make sure that you use research to help strengthen your essay while integrating it into your personal story. Remember, too, that active language and detailed descriptions of your personal experiences that put your reader into your shoes make the essay more powerful. In essence, show me your story rather than tell it.

Length: 4-5 Pages

Evaluation

I will focus on the following aspects in looking at your draft:

- ✓ Do you meld a personal story or stories to make a larger argument about a political or cultural issue?
- ✓ Is there clear essay structure that shows the story to the reader rather than just tells a story?
- ✓ Is there a moment of analysis, imbedded in the creative text, which persuades your reader to your point?
- ✓ Is it clear that you have used research to help give impact to both your argument and your personal story?
- ✓ Overall, does the essay have any major grammar, punctuation, and spelling concerns?
- ✓ Did you show significant revision practice—incorporating suggestions for improvement from both your instructor and your peers? (i.e. Have you made substantive changes to your essay based on feedback?)

Deadline: October 4, 2016