

A CHECKLIST FOR MEMOIR/FICTION

Here are the elements of writing that I'll be looking for you to demonstrate. Make sure to check these out before you turn in your final draft.

- Is the narrative written in present tense?
- Are all of the sentences written in active voice? If not, why not?
- Are you using dialogue when characters speak?
- Are there helping verbs that can be cut (is, are, was, will be, etc.)?
- Do you have a creative title on the essay?
- Is the first sentence interesting, surprising, or captivating enough to pull the reader into the narrative?
- Are there clichés? Cut them and use your own creative similes and metaphors.
- Have you checked and double-checked grammar and punctuation? Have you taken your paper to the Writing Center to have them look it over? If not – go now!
- Are you using indefinite pronouns (it, they, them, etc.) as the subject of the sentence? If so, replace the indefinite pronoun with the name of the person or thing.
- Have you cut out all of the adjectives and adverbs and replaced with concrete descriptions?
- As the narrative progresses, do you continue to describe surroundings using concrete nouns and verbs, and all five senses (what you see, hear, smell, taste, feel)?
- Is the format of the essay in proper manuscript style (name, class, teacher, date at top left corner, double spaced; 1 inch margins all around; title; pages numbered)?

If you can check off all of these, you'll have a good start on getting a better grade on the assignment.