

Prose: Creating Dramatic Scenes

What is Prose?

PROSE WRITING

Prose: Writing or speech in its normal continuous form, without the rhythmic or visual line structures of poetry

In Multigenre Papers writers can combine fact with imagination to invent scenes that illustrate truth or to render scenes that actually happened but whose details have been lost

When should you use Prose in Multi-Genre writing?

Three Times When to Use Prose

1. Indelible Moments
2. Central Acts
3. Things Crucial

Indelible Moments

In multigenre writing these moments show what our subjects value, we show what lasts, what has positive meaning that buoys those characters through life.

INDELIBLE MOMENTS

Indelible: Physically impossible to rub out, wash out or alter. Impossible to remove from the mind or memory and therefore remaining forever

Examples: Moments of happiness, joy, and ecstasy. Life without these bright moments would be bleak

INDELIBLE MOMENTS

- Not Always Bright
 - Sometimes they are dark and mark us forever
- JFK example

Example

dear jackie I can't see blackness oh god I've
been hit blood jackie so much blood
caroline...john...lets go sailing on the cape all
of us together help me jackie pounding
pounding why is my blood so loud jackie? don't
let them get her too I john fitzgerald kennedy
do solemnly swear tired I'm very tired my blood
is warm comforting I john take thee jacqueline
can't let you go jackie I love you dear god take
care of her for me... (Lori Livingston)

INDELIBLE MOMENTS

Think about your topic and create a list of indelible moments, both bright and dark, those moments that characters carry forever in your journal.

- Be specific. Identify actual moments not long stretches of time

Indelible: Physically impossible to rub out, wash out or alter. Impossible to remove from the mind or memory and therefore remaining forever

CENTRAL ACTS

- Many characters are identified with some act or process they do so routinely that it's part of them.
- Examples: I would have to depict Mother Theresa interacting with the poor. I would have to depict my own mother in the act of painting

CENTRAL ACTS

- Think about your topic and create a list of the central activities that are or were a part of your characters' lives.

THINGS CRUCIAL

- Inanimate objects, concepts, ideas can hold crucial places in our lives.
- Things become identified with who we are, what we value.

MEANINGFUL PLACES

- In one of the Beatles' most poignant songs John Lennon sings about places he will remember all his life.
- We never forget that house, that neighborhood, that room.
- Places shape us
- Create a list of crucial things and meaningful places for your topic.

Free Write

Choose an indelible moment, central act, thing crucial, or memorable place for you topic and write about it for the next ten minutes.

PROSE WRITING

Narrative Summary vs. Dramatic Scene

Narrative Summary Example

My mother broke the last three fingers of her right hand when she fell on an icy sidewalk, the bones shattering like peanut brittle. After the bones mended, she began to visit a physical therapist to regain the use of the gnarled, stiffened fingers. As the therapist worked with her hand, however, the activity was so painful that she nearly cried. Her usual sense of humor was hard-pressed to assert itself, but when she learned that she'd have to undergo physical therapy twice each day for the next several weeks, it finally emerged.

Dramatic Scene

The physical therapist sitting opposite my mother pressed steadily on the last three fingers of her right hand. His goal was to touch the stiffened fingers to the palm. With each increase in pressure, Mom leaned farther forward. Those fingers had brushed oil paints onto a thousand canvasses, but those fingers were sixty years old when she slipped on an icy city sidewalk. The bones had shattered like peanut brittle.

Dramatic Scene cont.

Mom leaned forward and her head bumped the therapist's knee. "When do I yell?"

The therapist eased the pressure and grinned. Mom sat up straight, blinking back tears.

"If you want to use the fingers again," he said, "you'll have to do this twice a day."

Mom rolled her eyes. "That'll spice up my life."

PROSE WRITING

Narrative Summary vs. Dramatic Scene

PROSE WRITING

Narrative Summary vs. Dramatic

- Readers will understand narrative summary, but they come close to experiencing dramatic scene.

Homework

Due Next Class:

Prose Rough Draft: Create a dramatic scene about an indelible moment, a central act, a crucial thing, or a memorable place.

