

"The best way to pay for a lovely moment is to enjoy it."

Richard Bach

Every childhood includes special times, whether they are holidays, family celebrations or other occasions. Write about the special times in your life, past and present.

Getting started

Choose from the questions below to help you write:

1. What was the best gift you ever received when you were young? What was the best gift you ever gave?
2. What are some of your family traditions? For example, do you always cut your own Christmas tree, go to Grandma's for Thanksgiving dinner, camp in the mountains on Memorial Day weekend or attend community festivals like Cinco de Mayo, Chinese New Year's or Oktoberfest? Is there a particular holiday you remember especially well?
3. What birthday do you remember best? Why?
4. Does your family take vacations together? If so, where have you gone? How did you get there? What was the most fun? What was not fun?
5. What do you like to do on holidays or special occasions, like the Fourth of July, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, etc.
6. Were you ever in a wedding? Whose was it? What did you do? What did you wear?
7. What "firsts" do you remember so far in your life – first airplane ride, first communion, first time you rode a bicycle, first time you went to the movies, etc.? Describe these firsts.

LIFE'S

HIGHS & LOWS

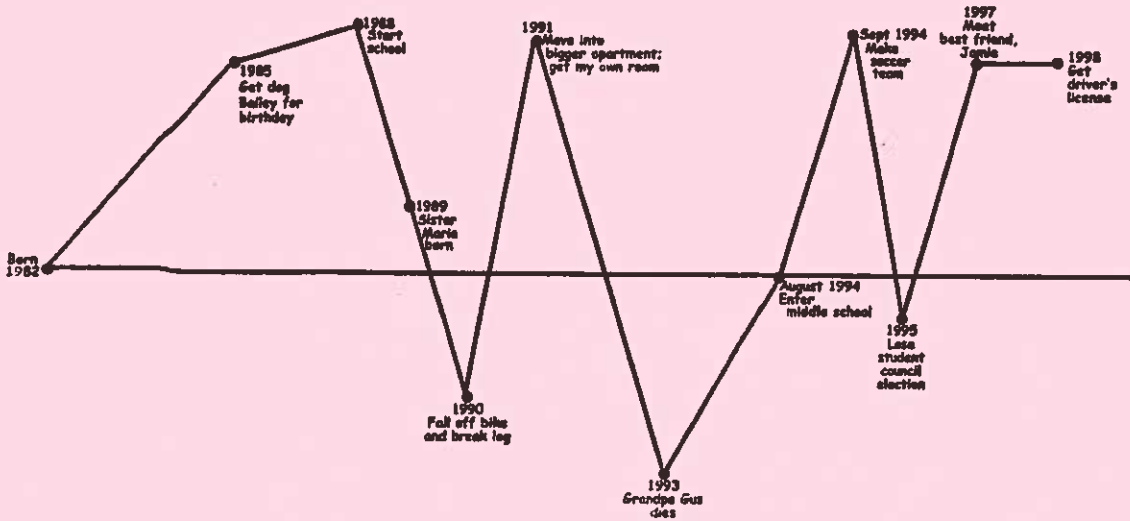
"Those who don't know how to weep with their whole heart, don't know how to laugh either."

Golda Meir

What have been the high points of your life? The low points? Looking back over your past, draw a graph of your life's highs and lows.

Use the center of a page for "average" times. Then plot high points above that line and low points below it. Connect the points with a line to complete your graph.

Example



On a separate sheet you are to plot at least 10 points on the graph, with at least 3 of those being lows. You may use words & /or pictures.





Family Crest

A “*coat of arms*,” or “*family crest*,” symbolizes the traditions and history of a particular family. They are emblems designed to represent a family. Using the form below, you are to design a crest for your family.

Go to the following website for some background and historical information. On the website you can also find a useful list of colors, animals, symbols and design features you are to incorporate into you crest.

<http://www.storyboardtoys.com/gallery/coat-of-arms-lesson-plan.htm>

- You are to include at least 4 pictorial symbols in your crest that relate to your family. One of those symbols needs to be a animal.

It should include things like hobbies, family traditions, sports, pets, etc. (things that are important to your family).

- You also need to incorporate a family motto or saying in the banner, on your crest.
- Make sure you incorporate color into your crest.

Life Messages

"A proverb is a short sentence based on long experience."

Cervantes

We all know about rules, and we sometimes get tired of them: "Don't chew gum in class." "Don't hit your brother." "You can't watch television until you've done your homework." These are rules about school or home.

But there are other rules that are perhaps more important. Those are the sayings, proverbs and messages about life that we grow up hearing from parents, teachers and other adults. They are often so much a part of life that we don't even notice them.

These life messages aren't the big rules, like "Do not kill," or "Do not steal." Most of us have little trouble not killing and not stealing on any given day. Instead, they are rules about day-to-day living. They are the rules and messages that, over the years, have an enormous impact on our daily lives.

See if you can remember some of the messages you have heard growing up, listing them in the space below. Here are a few examples:

- Life isn't fair.
- Don't be a quitter.
- Share.
- Let your conscience be your guide.
- If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all.
- It doesn't matter what everyone else is doing; you aren't everyone else.

After you complete your list, write about those messages. How do you think they have affected you? Do you believe them? Why or why not?

YOUR FAMILY

"Big sisters are the crab grass in the lawn of life."

Charles M. Schultz, Peanuts

Family life is one of the strong glues of our society, yet every family is different from every other family. Describe your family. (If you live part of the time with one parent and part of the time with another, you may choose to write about either or both family situations.)

Getting started

Choose from the questions below to help you write:

1. Who do you live with? Who are the people in your family? How do you think your family is like most families? How do you think it is different?
2. Who is your mother? What does she look like? Describe her personality and your relationship with her. What does she do for a living? What are her hobbies? What do you remember most about her from when you were very small? What have you learned from her so far?
3. Who is your father? What does he look like? Describe his personality and your relationship with him. What does he do for a living? What are his hobbies? What do you remember most about him from when you were very small? What have you learned from him so far?
4. Who are your brothers and sisters? Tell their names and ages, and describe each of them. What are they like? What do you like to do with each of them? To whom do you feel closest, and why?
5. Does anyone outside your immediate family live with you? How does that work out?
6. Who is your favorite relative outside the immediate family, and why?
7. If you have stepparents, describe them. How have you adjusted to having them in your life?
8. Do you have stepbrothers or stepsisters? Half sisters or half brothers? How have you adjusted to having them in your life?