

Personal Narrative: Desideratum

Mr. Eble, CP1 Sophomore American Literature

Desideratum (noun): *something wanted or needed*

To Chris McCandless, it was essential that he could live off the grid, supporting himself through his own means. He gave away his inheritance, burned his money and walked into the wilderness with few possessions. He actively resisted the life that most of us live, one that is safe and comfortable. Chris encouraged those he met to embrace the minimalist existence of the nomad, eschewing comforts of home for experiences available only to those who are willing to step off usual path. Chris felt so strongly about his choices that he willingly placed himself in harm's way for them *and* sacrificed his closest relationships.

1. In this personal essay, describe your desideratum, one belief that guides your life. You might also wish to discuss how you came to this belief, why it's essential to you, how you intend to pursue it, conflicts you may encounter along the way (particularly in relationship with those around you), and what you hope to accomplish through it.
2. You'll also describe your connection to Chris, the Romantics / Transcendentalists, and Krakauer in a **one page comparison / contrast**, which you should submit with your essay. This comparison / contrast should include quotes from the various texts and answers to these questions:
 - How is my desideratum similar to or different from that of Chris, John Krakauer, and Romantics / Transcendentalists? What details from the various texts in this unit demonstrate this similarity / difference best?
 - Beyond *what* I want, how are my *means* of achieving my desideratum similar to or different from the various Romantics / Transcendentalists?

Remember—*please provide details from the text.*

The rubric for part one is below; for part two, I'll assess you based upon

- How well you use text from the texts studied in this unit (use *at least* three).
- Attributing, Citing, Explaining those quotes
- Understanding of the Romantics / Transcendentalists
- The depth of thought in your comparison / contrast

Point Values

Part 1—100-point revised essay grade

Part 2—50-point revised essay grade

Personal Narrative Rubric

Mr. Eble, English

WRITER'S NAME:

Category Score:

Content	Weak	Fair	Good	Strong
1. Starts with an engaging introduction and draws the reader into the topic				
2. Focuses on a specific, well-defined topic -- an incident, experience, person or idea				
3. Tells an interesting story and elaborates with specific, vivid images and examples				
4. Explains why the topic is important to the author				
5. Ends with a satisfying conclusion				

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Organization	Weak	Fair	Good	Strong
6. Follows a coherent pattern of organization (beginning, middle, end)				
7. Demonstrates proper and effective paragraphing				
8. Uses transitional words and phrases to maintain coherence and establish sequence within and between paragraphs				

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Style	Weak	Fair	Good	Strong
9. Uses a vivid, precise vocabulary that is appropriate for the essay's audience				
10. Uses a variety of clear, correct sentence structures				
11. Written with a distinctive "voice" that conveys the personality of the writer				

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Conventions	Weak	Fair	Good	Strong
12. Contains no more than one or two minor errors in grammar or usage				
13. Contains no more than one or two minor errors in spelling, capitalization or punctuation				

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

20 = 100%	19 = 96%	18 = 92%	17 = 88%
16 = 84%	15 = 80%	14 = 76 %	13 = 72 %
12 = 72 %	11 or below = 69%		

Commendations / Recommendations: