

From Lifetime Memories and Stories, copyright Internet 2009.accessed March 3, 2018. (not Quin's notes)

No matter what method you choose to tell your story, your own reasons for writing your autobiography will color how it is approached. The emphasis you place on the various areas will be different from another person embarking on their own autobiography.

Here are a few subjects for lists and the short descriptions that go with them that will get you started. The questions are only to give you a starting point, make your own list of questions and jot down the answers.

Start with a simple list and then expand upon it so that you build up short word pictures.

Places

What are the places I have lived in? As a child, a teenager, a young adult etc.

What were these places like?

What was significant about the place? If it was a farm what was the land like? Was it a cropping farm or livestock?

What was the town, suburb, city like?

Did you change places and what did that feel like?

People

Who were the significant people in my life? As a child, a teenager, a young adult etc.

What did these people mean to me?

What were they like? What did they look like, what sort of clothes did they wear, how did they behave?

What did I learn from them? What experiences did I share with them? How did they affect my life?

Jot down as many events and life experiences about your life as you can think of.

Keep your note book handy so that when you think of something it is there for you. A few words will do the trick, this is your "memory trigger" they don't have to be complete sentences or even fully detailed.

- Maybe it is something about one of the places you lived in?

- Something you remember about a favorite uncle or aunt.
- Perhaps it's about when you saw something in the big city or the birth of a child.
- You may have travelled widely or undertook studies.

Once you start you will get the idea and the memories will start flowing. One thought will lead to another and soon you will have filled your first notebook.

- What are the key points of your story, what are the most relevant things in your life – family, career, travel, or all of these with equal emphasis?
- What will your readers find most interesting? Usually readers like to discover more about the person whose story they are reading. They like to know about the context of events.
- What were the places, times and events you experienced really like? Be honest and write from the heart and allow your readers to feel your emotions and form a picture in their mind from your words.
- Talk about your struggles and triumphs, the strong emotions and if difficult decisions had to be made write about how you made your decisions.
- Do take your audience's feelings into account especially in a family story.

Writing Autobiography- accessed March 3, 2018 from Internet from wikiHOW

(This secular advice is from Internet for those wanting to write autobiographies)

What's your story? Anyone who has lived a full life has something fascinating to share with the world. The trick to writing an autobiography is to treat it like any good story: it should have a protagonist (you), a central conflict, and a cast of fascinating characters to keep people engaged. You may want to think about a certain theme or idea that has been present in your daily life to revolve your story around. Read on to learn how to craft the story of your life and polish your writing to make it sing.

Write out your life timeline. Start writing your autobiography by conducting research on your own life. Creating a timeline of your life is a good way to make sure you include all the most important dates and events, and it gives you a structure to build upon. You can consider this the "brainstorming" phase, so don't hesitate to write down everything you can remember, even if you don't think the memory will make it into the final version of the book.

- Your autobiography doesn't have to begin with your birth. You may want to include some family history as well. Write down information about your ancestry, your grandparents' lives, your parents' lives, and so on. Having information about your family history will help readers get a sense of how you became the person you are.

- What happened when you were a teenager? What led you to make the decisions you made?
- Did you go to college? Write about those transitory years, too.
- Write about your career, your relationships, your children, and any big life-altering events that occurred.

Identify the main characters. Every good story has interesting characters, friends and foes who help move the plot along. Who are the characters in your life? It's a given that your parents will play a role, along with your spouse and other close family members. Think beyond your immediate family to others who have affected your life and should play a role in your autobiography.

- Teachers, coaches, mentors, and bosses are extremely influential in people's lives. Decide whether someone who has been a role model (or the opposite) for you will figure into your story.
- Ex-boyfriends and girlfriends might co-star in some interesting stories.
- What enemies have you had in life? Your story will be boring if you don't include some conflicts.
- Offbeat characters such as animals, celebrities you've never met, and even cities are often points of interest in an autobiography.

Pull out the best stories. The story of your entire life would start to get pretty long-winded, so you'll have to make some decisions about what anecdotes you're going to include. Begin drafting your manuscript by writing out the main stories that will be woven together to create a picture of your life. There are a few main topics that most autobiographies cover since readers find them fascinating.

- The childhood story. Whether your childhood was happy or traumatic, you should include a few anecdotes that give a picture of who you were and what you experienced at the time. You can tell the story of your childhood by breaking it down into smaller anecdotes that illustrate your personality - your parents' reaction when you brought home a stray dog, the time you climbed out the window at school and ran away for 3 days, your friendly relationship with a homeless person living in the woods . . . get creative.
- The coming of age story. This heady and often sensual period in a human's life is always of interest to readers. Remember that it's not about writing something unique; everyone comes of age. It's about writing something that resonates with readers.
- The falling in love story. You could also write the opposite of this, the never-finding-love story.
- The identity crisis story. This usually occurs in the 30s or 40s, and is sometimes referred to as a mid-life crisis.

- The story of facing down some force of evil. Whether its your battle with addiction, a controlling lover, or a madman who tried to kill your family, you've got to write about conflict you've experienced.

Write in your own voice. People read autobiographies to gain insight on what its like to be someone else. Being authentically you is a sure way to keep people engaged. If your writing is formal and stiff, or if it reads like a college essay instead of an expose on your life, people will have trouble getting through the book.

Write as though you're opening your heart to a trusted friend, in prose that's clear, strong and not too cluttered with vocabulary words you rarely use.

Write so that your personality is revealed. Are you funny? Intense? Spiritual? Dramatic? Don't hold back; your personality should come through in the way you tell your story.

Be revealing. You don't have to be explicit, but it's important to reveal truths about yourself and your life in an autobiography. Don't let the book become a list of your accomplishments, with all the negative material carefully kept under the rug. Present yourself as a whole person, sharing talents and flaws alike, and your readers will be able to identify with you and hopefully root for you as they make their way through your story.

- Don't always cast yourself in a positive light. You can have foibles and still be the protagonist. Reveal mistakes you've made and times when you've failed yourself and other people.
- Reveal your inner thoughts. Share your opinions and ideas, including those that may spark controversy. Be true to yourself through your autobiography.

Capture the spirit of the times. How was your story shaped by the moment in history in which it took place? What wars influenced your politics? What cultural events inspired you? Be sure to include a few important dates so readers can understand the sequencing of the events you are describing. Discussing what happened in the world at large during your lifetime is a good way to make your story more relevant and interesting to those reading it.

Free Guide on How to Write Autobiography, accessed March 3, 2018 From Internet.

(Note: This one is suggesting an outline first which some people prefer)

You have a story to tell. Whether you want to tell your entire life story or just a particular part of it is up to you. Writing about your own life takes time, effort and dedication; it also takes organization and planning. But before you put your pen to the paper, take the time to reflect on your story and plan a road map for your book.

Create an outline for your autobiography. This helps determine exactly what you want to include in your book, and it serves as a reminder while you write. Start with some basic information about yourself. Autobiographies usually include factual details about the author's life, and they are presented in chronological order. Include your birth date and birthplace and some important memories from your early childhood. The rest of your outline must include specific events in your life that you want to write about in your autobiography. List each event, and note why you want to include it, what you want to say about it and any insights or ideas you have about that particular time of your life. Don't be afraid to deviate from your outline as you write. It is merely a guideline to get you started.

Engage your audience. If a reader is not interested in a book within the first page or two, she may never finish it. Start your autobiography with something known in the writing world as a "hook." This can be an interesting revelation about you, a dramatic incident in your life or an expression of a powerful emotion. Let the readers believe they are getting to know you right from the start.

Write. If you can, dedicate time each day to your book. You may find that you write best at certain times of the day or in certain settings. Write whenever and wherever you feel most creative. Perhaps you prefer a coffee shop in the morning. Maybe you can write any time or anywhere as long as you have a yellow legal pad on hand. It may seem silly, but small details can make a big difference to a writer. Take advantage of things that inspire you. Don't worry about writing in order. You can arrange your autobiography as you go. Write whatever part of your life is on your mind at the time.

Revise your work. Look back through your autobiography after you have completed it. This gives you a chance to correct any errors you find, rearrange material and add or remove anything you feel is necessary. For an autobiography, check that you have arranged events in chronological order. If an event seems unimportant, you may want to cut it out, or you may find that other events need to be added to truly tell your story. Also, have a trusted friend or writing partner read your autobiography to look for inconsistencies and spelling or grammar errors.