

AP English Literature

Creative Writing

Narrative/Character Sketch on Your Childhood/Adolescent Self

Introduction

In the opening pages of her memoir *Just Kids*, Patti Smith does the following things for us:

- narrates significant early memories of her “*awakening*” as a human being (i.e. memories of becoming aware of herself and aware of the world and beings around her)
- describes her *inner life* as a child—i.e., the workings of her mind or her consciousness as a child (what she remembers thinking about, caring about, wondering about, as well as how she felt and why)
- communicates the importance of *literature, storytelling, and art* in her childhood, her adolescence, and her sense of identity

Patti Smith accomplishes all these tasks through her use of language—a mixture of narration, concrete description, and reflection.

Writing Assignment

I would like you to write a much shorter piece, similar to Smith’s, in which you help me get to know you.

Please write a 2-3 page narrative / memoir / character sketch that provides a detailed “picture” (or series of pictures) of your childhood and/or adolescent self. Do at least some of these things that Patti Smith does in her piece:

- narrate one (or more) significant early *memory of your “awakening”* as a human being (i.e. a memory of becoming aware of yourself and aware of the world and beings around you)
- describe *your inner life* as a child or adolescent—i.e., the workings of your mind or your consciousness as a child or adolescent (what you remember thinking about, caring about, wondering about, as well as how you felt and why)
- communicate *the importance of literature, storytelling, and art* in your childhood, your adolescence, and/or your sense of identity