

Your Reading Autobiography

from *Creating the Literature Portfolio*, Alan Purves and Joseph Quattrini

Begin your own reading autobiography by answering the questions that follow. Consider these responses to be your working draft. Then, organize and present your answers in a few pages of unified writing—your personal “story” of your own reading. Your instructor might ask you to read these aloud or to share them with portfolio group members or the rest of the class.

(Note from your instructor, that’s me. You do not have to prepare a formal piece of writing until you use this for Wanna Piece of Me. For now, let’s just think, talk, and jot down notes. I wish you would all ask your parents or grandparents (if possible) these questions as well, and have a *Reading Remembrance*.

1. What were your earliest experiences with stories? Who read to you (or told you stories)? When and where? What stories or books do you remember as being first?
2. What stories or books made a strong impression on you? If you selected three favorite books or stories from your younger days, what would they be?
3. What do you choose to read now? How do you choose works or genres or authors or topics? What are the last three books you read? Why did you read each one? What are you reading right now? What are you looking forward to reading—specific works or types of works?

4. Besides books, what else do you read? What poems, essays, articles, scenes from dramas, or other forms do you choose to read? How do you choose which ones to read? Whose recommendations do you follow?

5. When and where do you read the works you are reading by choice? What surroundings do you prefer for reading?

6. What features of the things you read do you find most interesting? What features are you most likely to notice?

7. What kinds of things do you like to write or discuss about what you read? To whom do you usually talk or write about books and other works you read?

8. How would you describe yourself as a reader (don't say *bookworm*, please)? What does reading do for you—or to you?