

Basic Narrative Outline Sample

Title: Welcome to Kansas!

Opening paragraph:

Describe/introduce the characters and setting:

When I was 8 some sirens went off in my neighborhood. My parents and I didn't know what was happening, so we went to a neighbor's house to find out. Our neighbor, Barb Ritter, knew some sign language. We stayed in her basement with a sliding-glass door where we saw the beautiful monsters.

Body Paragraphs:

Transition word/s: Back in 1980...

Describe events/action: I was riding around on my bike after school one late afternoon. I noticed that the clouds started to turn green. I started to hear some sirens in different locations. I dutifully went inside and told my parents. I didn't know what sirens going off in Kansas meant. My parents were Deaf and didn't know what was going on either. Plus they moved here 9 years ago from New Mexico. They both signed maniacally, "S. I. R. E. N....MEAN WHAT? SOUND-LIKE WHAT?"

(Dad) HEARING-AID, EEEEEEE?

(Mom) TELEPHONE?

(Dad) POLICE CAR?

I said, "Maybe it's an ambulance or fire truck."

(Mom) ???HOUSE ON-FIRE? DOUBT.

(Dad) WHERE? NEAR-HERE OR FAR-AWAY?

"Sort of both," I answered.

(Mom and Dad) WHAT MEAN BOTH?" I tried to explain it, but I didn't understand it myself.

Transition word/s: Just then...

Describe events/action: our neighbor, Barb Ritter, an older skinny woman from across the street told us we better go inside. "It doesn't look good." My parents had a ton of questions, so I became the interpreter. Barb could sign a few things and finger spell, but it wasn't enough in a time of emergency. She told us that a tornado was coming and offered her basement as shelter.

Transition word/s: Immediately...

Describe events/action: we followed her through her house of ash trays, down a spiral staircase to her basement where we stood in front of a sliding glass door that faced west...the direction the tornado was sighted. She explained where and how we should take cover if a tornado hit.

Transition word/s: Suddenly...

Describe events/action: My mom cried out, but the words were unintelligible. She went down on her knees and started praying. We looked out the glass doors and saw a terribly

beautiful sight. A small funnel cloud came bouncing along with a huge cloud of dust at its feet. Soon we could see objects whirling around in the cloud, flashes of silver, uprooted trees.

Transition word/s: As...

Describe events/action: the twister got closer, I could feel a wave of panic grab hold of us all. Unbelievably, the tornado split in two and became twin tornadoes bounding in our direction. The wind simultaneously went from absolutely still to roaring in the course of about 10 seconds. Barb smashed her cigarette down and screamed, "We're in its path. Take cover!"

Transition word/s: In the next moment...

Describe events/action including the Climax: there was an awesome roaring and pounding sound. We all ran away from the doorway, as Barb had instructed, and covered our heads. We cowered along a wall, and protected our bodies with thick comforters. I wondered what that deafening sound was. It was as if a million midgets were tapping their canes on the house. It couldn't be rain. That was too soft. This was pounding and pelting. The house creaked several times and the wind screamed. That was a moment I wished I was Deaf, free from the frightful flurry. In about three minutes it was all gone.

Conclusion/Resolution Paragraphs:

Describe how the problem was solved:

Slowly, we lifted the blankets from our bodies and tapped each other alive. We couldn't believe our eyes. The sun was shining and the ground was littered with a three-inch layer of twigs and ice cubes! My dad said the hail was from the sky, but that the twigs were from the woods between the tornados and us.

Describe what happens thereafter:

We all went outside to see if there was any damage to the neighborhood. I started collecting the golf-ball sized hail to put in the freezer to keep for show and tell. I collected about ten of the biggest hailstones I could find under a three-quarter rainbow that evening.

Describe a lesson learned:

I thought it wry to see so much destruction come from such beauty.