

IMAGINATIVE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

PARENT (OR OTHER ADULT) REVIEW

Reviewer's Name _____ Date of Review _____

THE ASSIGNMENT

Each student was asked to write an autobiography which covers his or her life from birth to approximately twenty years from now. The work is to include truthful information from the past and present, as well as imagined details regarding the future. The absolute minimum is an introduction, a conclusion and five strong body paragraphs; the maximum is about four typed, double-spaced pages. Approximately one-third of the writing should be about the student's past and present life and the other two-thirds (or so) should be about the future. The writing should be thoughtful, descriptive and genuinely reflect who the student is and who he or she hopes to be.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Please read the student's IMAGINATIVE AUTOBIOGRAPHY from beginning to end. Do not make notes or edit while you do this--just read through the entire piece.

Feel free to glance at the questions on the back of this handout to help you with the tasks listed below.

- Please write at least one compliment (and no more than 5) about the student's IMAGINATIVE AUTOBIOGRAPHY in the space below.

- Please write at least one suggestion (and no more than 5) about the student's IMAGINATIVE AUTOBIOGRAPHY in the space below.

Now read through the piece a second time and mark on the paper any errors that get in the way of you fully understanding the student's writing.

Note: It may be difficult (and possibly counter-productive) to comment on all errors, so you are encouraged to focus on those that appear most frequently or the ones that are most troublesome for you as a reader.

While you are reading the student's IMAGINATIVE AUTOBIOGRAPHY, you are encouraged to reflect on these six writing traits:

Ideas & Content:

- Are the ideas fully developed and clearly presented?
- Does the writing tell a story?
- Are there details that help create a picture of the student's real experiences or make the student's imagined experiences seem real?

Organization:

- Does the organization make sense?
- Does the writing follow a specific organizational strategy such as moving through the information chronologically or thematically?
- Does the order of the writing and your paragraphs move the reader through the text?

Sentence Fluency:

- Are the structures of the sentences varied?
- Does the student mix short and long sentences to enhance the rhythm of the writing?
- Do the sentences flow smoothly?
- When you read the student's writing aloud, does it sound as good as when you read it to yourself?

Conventions:

- Has the student tended to the mechanical errors that trip up readers (remember CUPS: capitalization, word usage, punctuation, and spelling)?
- Does the writing avoid sentence fragments and run-ons?
- Do the paragraph breaks make sense?
- Does the writing suggest that the student has checked the writing for careless errors and has used his or her best proofreading skills?

Word Choice:

- Does the writing show care was taken with varying word choice so as to avoid repetition?
- Has the student made a point of not being too informal in his or her writing (words or phrases like "Well," "You know," "Ginormous," or "It rocks" are fine for casual conversation, but not for school assignments)?
- Is there evidence that the student stretched his or her vocabulary a bit by choosing interesting words, but ones that still fit who s/he is and how s/he writes?

Voice:

- Does the writing have energy?
- Does it seem that everything that is written has a purpose?
- Does it say, "Read me! I have focus and character. I'm not just a list of experiences or a rambling account; I am filled with important stories told with engaging details"?
- Does it scream "This is _____ (insert student's name here)!"?