

CLASS III—READING HIGHLIGHTS

Dawn Field—The Micro-Memoir: Start Your Memoir with A Moment

1. Decide which span of time you are describing
2. Decide how personal you are going to get
3. Decide whether you are sticking with pure fact, or will you embellish?
4. Decide the message of your memoir or micro-memoir
5. Even in nonfiction/memoir there are storytelling tenets to adhere to
6. Decide where to start
7. A good place to start is in a single moment.
 - a. Think of the moment as “micro-memoir”
 - b. Moments are spans of time—THE ARE MOEMENTS
8. Events that qualify as moments
 - a. Realizations
 - b. Decisions
9. While there may be many moments, such as multiple trips to a hospital, PICK ONE, and decide
 - a. Why?
 - b. Which is the most poignant?
 - c. Will give your reader the clearest insights into your challenges and inner workings
10. Learning to pull out the iconic moment is key to the art of memoir writing.
11. Ideally, your memoir will be a chain of gripping moments, strung together like pearls.

Roy Peter Clark—How To Write Short

1. A hard part of the writing process is cutting, knowing what to cut and what to keep
2. It is everyday writing that inspires the most committed works
3. If you want to write long, begin by writing short

4. Practice writing plain sentences that contain a grace note, one interesting word that stands out, such as Saramago's *chimera*.
5. Von Drehle—The Set of Focusing Questions:
 - a. Why does the story matter
 - b. What's the point?
 - c. Why is the story being told?
 - d. What does the story say about life, the world, the times we live in?
6. Chip Scanlan adds:
 - a. What's my story REALLY about?
7. Grace Notes:
 - a. What's my point?
 - b. In a sentence, what am I trying to say?
 - c. What is the work really about?
 - d. Have I taken a detour?
 - e. Have I squeezed in extra stuff?
 - f. Have I shifted tenses or language styles?

DANI SHAPIRO—CORNER from Still Writing

1. Start small. If you try to think about all of it at once—the world you hope to capture on the page, everything you know,...you'll be overcome with paralysis.
2. Think of a jigsaw puzzle... pick one piece at a time

WHY WE WRITE ABOUT OURSELVES—DANI SHAPIRO

1. Know your reasons for embarking on this memoir
2. Don't worry about what people will think as you are writing a first draft.
3. Remember that you are telling a story. Not everything belongs.
 - a. Understand that you may write other memoirs down the road, but come to know the frame around this story.