**Possible Ways to Begin your Personal Narrative**

**Action (Suspense)**

* I gulped my milk, pushed away from the table, and bolted out of the kitchen, slamming the broken screen door behind me. I ran down to our dock as fast as my legs could carry me. My feet pounded on the old wood, hurrying me toward my dad’s voice. “Scott!” he bellowed again.

**Character Thinking**

* I couldn’t imagine why my father was hollering for me at 7:00 in the morning. I thought fast about what I might have done to get him so riled. Had he found out about the way I talked to my mother the night before, when we got to camp and she asked me to help unpack the car? Did he discover the fishing reel I broke last week? Before I could consider a third possibility, Dad’s voice shattered my thoughts.

**Question**

* What’s in a name? Nothing – and everything. It is after all, just a name, one tiny piece of the puzzle that makes up a person. However, when someone has a nickname like “Dumbo,” a name can be the major force in shaping one’s sense of self. That’s how it was for me.

**Quote**

* There are several choices for using a quote to engage the reader. One way is to begin with the quote and then tie the quote into the opening: “The greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor” ~ Aristotle

**Snapshot of setting**

* It was hard to walk through the throngs of people – women pushing carriages, kids running and bumping into each other, older couples strolling along arm-in-arm – as bits of notes floated in between from the merry-go-round, my favourite ride.

**Snapshot of a character**

* Billy was not a coward. He just didn’t like the twisty, turny rides, especially the ones that turned you upside down. For an eight-year-old, he usually was pretty bold. He even didn’t mind sleeping in his own bedroom without a nightlight.

**Foreshadowing**

* If only Billy had known that he was tall enough to ride the Rolling Thunder. Why did he always talk before he thought things out?

**Simile**

* The roller coaster track twisted and turned like an enormous boa constrictor wrapped around the limb of an ancient tree of the rain forest.

**Question**

* Is there any better way to spend a beautiful Saturday than at Great Adventure Amusement Park with your best friends?

**Action (Suspense)**

* Higher and higher it climbed, until it almost disappeared into the billowing clouds, and all we could hear was the screaming.

**Metaphor**

* It was a beautiful day, but windy enough to send wispy cloudships sailing through the blue-ocean sky.

**Personification**

* The old cars moaned and groaned as they were pulled up the wooden track by invisible hands.

**Appeal to the senses**

* The sickening sweet scent of fear drifted to my nose as I stared at what seemed like miles of roller coaster tracks. I glanced around me to see if anyone else caught a whiff. Salty beads of sweat had formed on my brow. I wiped them away with clammy hands.

**Taking the reader back**

* When Billy was only two years old, his Grandpa swung him upside down and round and round. At first he giggled and laughed, but when he started sputtering and gagging and spitting up everywhere, he ran for his grandmother, burying his head in the folds of her skirt and crying his eyes out. Yes, that’s when my brother must have started hating roller coasters.