**Senior English – Autobiography**

**This is Your Life**

**ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION**

Writing an autobiography can help you take a close look at the patterns of your personal development and clarify your personal values. Portions of the autobiography will be assigned at various times throughout the year. The finished product will provide you with an exciting self-portrait.

Your autobiography will present a portrait of your life, from before your birth until now. As you work on this project throughout the year, you will be writing about many different topics.

**CHAPTERS AND TIME LINE**

The autobiography will contain eight chapters when the project is completed:

1. Birth, Early Childhood, and Family – September 23
2. Education – October 28
3. People and Friends – November 25
4. Likes and Dislikes – December 16
5. Successes and Failures – January 20
6. Career Plans – February 18
7. Feelings and Beliefs – March 10
8. Reflections of the Past and Hopes for the Future – April 14

**Book due with all corrections made – May 1**

Several written exercises will be assigned to help you frame the ideas for each chapter. Be sure that you express answers to all questions in complete thoughts. For example, suppose the exercise asks, “Which would you rather be? A.) an only child; B.) the youngest in the family; C.) the oldest in the family. Perhaps you might selected C as your answer. If you simply wrote “the oldest, when you read the autobiography later, you would have to ask “the oldest what?” A complete answer would be “I would rather be the oldest child in the family because the oldest gets more privileges.”

Each exercise within a chapter is to be written as a separate paragraph. The paragraphs in a single chapter will follow each other on the same sheet of paper. If you want to use subtitles, that is great. All exercises must be typed unless otherwise indicated. Make sure you save all your chapters in at least two places, for example, your hard drive and a flash drive. I will be marking on your papers, and then you will revise each chapter. The final project will have no markings whatsoever on it. You will also need to decide how you are going to put your chapters together.

**Grading** – I will grade each chapter according to the six traits of writing.

**Chapter 1 – Birth, Early Childhood, and Family**

Directions: Type the following information. If any of this information is not available to you, write as much of your early childhood as you can, including the special people you know as family and the places you’ve lived.

**DO NOT ABBREVIATE!**

Full name as found on my birth certificate:

Date of Birth:

Time of Birth:

Weight at Birth:

Length at Birth:

City, State, (and country if different than the USA)

Name of hospital or place of birth:

My mother’s full name – including maiden name

My father’s full name

My mother’s occupation at time of my birth and my mother’s current occupation (if it has

changed)

My father’s occupation at time of my birth and my father’s current occupation (if it has changed)

Name of brothers and sisters

Name of doctor who delivered me (and nurses if you have that information)

Where my family was living when I was born:

Where we live now (if different from above)

1. Have your family help you complete “My Family Tree.” If you do not have this information, you may skip this section and go to Exercise 3, but make sure you tell Mrs. Breth. (Any type of family tree will work.)
2. Find pictures of your family and write COMPLETE captions for each. Make sure you have your parents’ permission to use family pictures. You may want to scan your pictures. Try to include at least pictures of you, your parents, and your siblings.

**Directions: For each of the following exercises, write one or two paragraphs – unless stated otherwise. Please separate the exercises with titles. Do NOT include the exercise number.**

1. If you had your choice, would you rather be A.) an only child; B.) the youngest in the family; C.) the oldest in the family. EXPLAIN your answer.
2. Many little children misunderstand certain words or ideas, and as they grow older realize their mistakes. For example, a little girl used to think the yellow line down the middle of the road was where the motorcycles drove. Brainstorm with your parents and recall your “used to thinks.” Write a paragraph or two about them. (If you can’t think of anything, ask your parents when you no longer believed in Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, or the tooth fairy.)
3. Describe the ideal sister, brother, father, AND mother. Write at least a paragraph for each and then explain how close your siblings and parents match the ideals.
4. Complete the following statement: “Compared with most families, mine \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.” Then explain your response.
5. Write something about your grandparents? Where do (did) they live? What do (did) they do for a living? What do (did) they do for fun? How did your grandparents meet? Do they remember a special holiday or birthday? Or maybe a special Christmas or birthday present? YOU MUST ANSWER THIS QUESTION: WHAT WILL YOU ALWAYS REMEMBER ABOUT YOUR GRANDPARENTS? (fishing trip, quilts, Grandma’s peanut butter cookies?) Find out something interesting about your grandparents, something that your great-grandchildren should know about their ancestors. (I would like you to write about both sides of your family – if possible. If this exercise is not possible to do, see Mrs. Breth.) Do not limit yourselves to one or two paragraphs. Write as much as possible. Don’t let these memories die.
6. Write something about your great-grandparents. Where did they live? What did they do for a living? What did they do for fun? Talk to your grandparents and ask them for stories of their parents. For example, what was Christmas like for them? How did their parents meet? Find out something interesting about your great-grandparents, something that your great-grandchildren should know about their ancestors. (I would like you to write about both sides of your family – if possible. If this exercise is not possible to do, see Mrs. Breth.) Write as much as possible. Don’t let these memories die.