

Rambling Autobiography

I was born at the height of World War II just as Anne Frank was forced into Bergen-Belsen by the Nazis. I adore Brigham's vanilla ice cream in a sugar cone and dipped in chocolate jimmies. I bought my favorite jacket for a dime at the Methodist Church rummage sale. I have lied to my parents. I never read a book for pleasure until I was 38 years old. One of my students once leaned in to me in an interview and said, "My mother's having a baby; this is the one she wants." When I was 12 I set the organdy curtains in our bathroom on fire, playing with matches. My favorite place to hide was high in the maple tree in our front yard where I could spy on neighbors. I can still smell wet white sheets pulled through the ringer washer when I think of Grammy Mac. I dated Edmundo in high school because it angered my father. I fainted when I heard the sound of the zipper as the mortician closed the body bag holding my mother. I gave birth to twin sons. I once had dinner with Judy Blume. I am a teacher who writes. I want to be a writer who teaches. . . .

Linda Rief



Try this:

- For 2–3 minutes, write as quickly as you can your own "rambling autobiography."
- For 2–3 minutes write as quickly and as specifically as you can about any one thing this brought to mind for you.
- If you're stuck for starters, borrow any phrase and write off that, such as
 - "I was born at . . . during . . . when . . ."
 - ". . . playing with matches . . ."
 - "I can still smell . . ."