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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1988 Volume III: Autobiography in America

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## Writing an Autobiography

Guide for Curriculum Unit 88.03.05  
by Lorna Dils

In this unit for sixth and seventh grade students with good reading abilities, students use autobiography to improve their writing skills. This student-centered approach to writing encourages students to write about the subjects they know best—themselves, their families and their friends. The writing process students follow is individualized and the unit provides suggestions for getting the most reluctant writers started while providing writing opportunities for more advanced students. Peer conferences are used to help students revise their work while teacher conferences help students edit their work and learn new skills. Mini-lessons taught to the whole class teach new skills also. Completed writing is shared by reading stories to the class and by putting finished work into booklets that are available for students and classroom visitors to read.

A brief bibliography of autobiographical books is also included in this unit so that students can read autobiography and gain a deeper understanding of the genre while working on their own writing. (Recommended for English classes, grades 6-8)

### **Key Words**

*General Writing Instruction*

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