Family Stories

*Family Stories* are narratives in which the youngster or other relatives are the featured characters in simple home adventures of days gone by.
Family Stories:

• Encourage students to learn about their heritage

• Acquire and refine literacy skills

• Develop a greater respect for the multicultural differences that make them unique
Starting with Literature

- Children’s literature gives pupils the opportunity to learn about themselves and their world through trade books.

- Books:
  - Offer varied views of family life
  - Share examples of family relationships
  - Show how normal daily activities become the focus of memorable stories
Mentor Texts

Using the writing in a trade book to model writing skills
- Ideas
- Organization
- Voice
- Word Choice
- Sentence Fluency
- Conventions
I think if you really want to write in a powerful way, you've got to read powerful stuff and just feel the power of it, because nobody writes out of a vacuum.

Ralph Fletcher interviewed by Franki Sibberson
Choice Literacy

Conversations in Literacy
MY GREAT-AUNT ARIZONA

BY GLORIA HOUSTON  ILLUSTRATED BY SUSAN CONDIE LAMB
The Keeping Quilt
Patricia Polacco
Offers sound, easy advice to young writers on how to write an autobiography.
Collecting the Stories

• “Tell me something I did when I was little.”
• “Tell me about your favorite relative and why they were your favorite.”
• “Tell me about the neighborhood where you lived as a child.”
• “Tell me about something that happened in your family that made you laugh.”
• “Tell me about a time when I got lost.”
• “Tell me about someone who used to come and visit at your house when you were growing up.”
Sharing the Stories Aloud

- Assimilate the concept of story structure
- Experiment with words
- Develop confidence in communicating through oral language
Preserving the Stories Through Writing

• For younger students, stories can be dictated onto a video recording or by using technology and can be transcribed by the teacher.

• Older students can record their own stories using the writing process.
Family Memory Map

- Me
- Family
- Alligator
- Uncle caught alligator
- Lake
- Air Boating

Air Boating Memory

- Lake
- Uncle caught alligator
- Pretended to throw it at cousins
- Me
- Family
- Alligator
Airboating

One of my most unforgettable family memories was when I was about eight years old. It all started when my family and I drove to a lake to go airboating. When we got to the lake we all got out of the cars and loaded up on the two airboats.

When my airboat left land it was about 6:00 p.m. My Uncle Larry was in the bottom of the airboat. We were riding around in the water and my uncle caught a four foot alligator. He pretended to throw it at my cousins on the other airboat.

He put the alligator back into the water. We all went back to land and we got off the airboat. Everybody said that they were tasting bugs from the ride. After that everybody went home.

Malorie B.
Jennifer died.

Me, Him, Mom, Grandma.

Leg got infected.

Great Grandpa died.

Sad time in life. Something that changed life.
Great Grandpa

In 2012 my mom went to Iowa to visit my Great Grandfather. He was in the hospital. His age was 87. The next few days my mom called. The last day we found out his leg was infected!

I started to cry. He was my favorite relative. Three days later my mom called again. I hoped everything was a mistake. But it turned out he had to lose his leg. I wished it was all a bad dream. It wasn't. He was operated on again a week later. The month after the operation he died. I will always have a hole in my heart knowing that he died.

Jennifer S.
Cutting Hair

One of our most unforgettable family memories was when I was about 3 years old. I was in my house watching T.V. when I saw a commercial about cutting hair. Then I thought to myself, I want to cut hair.

I went to my mom's room and got her fabric scissors and being 3, I started to cut my mom's hair. She was asleep at the time.

Then she woke up and found her hair laying on her bed. She found me with scissors in my hand and then she started to spank me. I'm sure it wasn't funny then, but now my mom and I laugh about it.

Kim H.
Celebrating Authorship!

A celebration could be scheduled where children, parents, extended family members, and/or caregivers come together to share the joy of family stories.
Family Box

• Each child’s guest selects one item from the home that has a family story attached and places it in a box. (photo, gift made by a beloved relative, heirloom, etc.)

• After the children have shared their writing, the guest shares what is in the family box and briefly tells the story associated with it.

• This new story might just be the impetus the child needs to record another family memory!
A final thought ...

Children and adults alike should be encouraged to record memories, for if we fail to reproduce our own life stories, the recollections may in time be lost forever.