



## Writing an Imaginative Autobiography

You have heard of “method acting” where an actor in order to study a role will try to become that person, even off screen or stage. Imaginative Autobiographies are like method acting—they call on you to pretend to be a character from your short story. They ask you to step into a character’s shoes and imagine their life history to help explain who they are and why they act the way they do in your story.

*Your task in an Imaginative Autobiography is to speak as the character and tell that character’s life story (especially as it pertains to the events of the short story).*

These pieces are meant to be creative chances to play and enter the world of the story. They have only two rules:

Rule #1: You have to speak in the voice of the character. You speak AS the character.

Rule #2: What you write should generally fit with what could likely or plausibly be true within the world of the short story.

They have one important goal: Try to write a life history that seems to explain the character or something important about them.

Your Imaginative Autobiography should be 1-2 pages in length (250-500 words). Post them in your group’s forum inside Canvas.

### Excerpt of an Example Imaginative Autobiography

Autobiography of John *By George P.*

My name is John and I was born in Fairfield Connecticut in 1850. I come from a very fine and well to do family. My father owns seven steel mills, from Bridgeport to New London. I chose medicine as my profession and graduated from Harvard at the top of my class. Once I had established my own successful practice everyone, especially father, constantly badgered me on the subject of marriage. My mother reminded me that the Gilman’s daughter was not yet married. Ah yes, Charlotte Gilman, the youngest daughter of my father’s oldest and closest friend. I don’t know if you can actually call them fast friends, but they were definitely business partners. Reluctantly, I saw Charlotte every time I visited home. I never once thought about marriage, at least not to her.

Two years had passed, my practice was thriving and I had several steady lady friends. In the summer of 1880, my mother took ill and I rushed to her side. I would use all my skill and knowledge to cure what ailed her. It was the fever she had, scarlet fever. There was nothing I could do to save her. I would sit with her for hours, and we would talk when she was able. She wanted so to see me married. Charlotte would visit often, and as the days passed, Charlotte was there more often than not. My mother said we made a fine couple. My father wrapped himself in the safe cocoon of work, not wanting to face the impending death of my mother. When she passed, I felt great loss and pain. Four months after the funeral, Charlotte and I were married, at the insistence...