



# Multimodal Narrative Writing

## Thumbprint Autobiography



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<b>Grade Level</b>	8th Grade	<b>Time Frame</b>	3-4 class period(s)
<b>Subject</b>	English/Language Arts	<b>Duration</b>	150 minutes
<b>Course</b>	Composition, Creative Writing		

### Essential Question

Who am I? What makes me, me?

### Summary

In this lesson, students explore the essential questions, "Who am I?" and "What makes me, me?", through multimodal narrative writing. For this creative composition, students engage in preliminary reflective writing and in an up-close look at their thumbprints. Throughout this creative writing process, students are also working with figurative language, question generation, and visual composition. Ultimately, students will compose a multimodal narrative that encourages visual literacy and re-think how a personal narrative can look. This lesson includes optional modifications for distance learning. Resources for use in Google Classroom are included.

### Snapshot

#### Engage

Students will complete a quickwrite and engage in a Think-Pair-Share session, then watch two videos about fingerprints.

#### Explore

Students will reflect on and respond to the Thumbprint Autobiography handout. Using the Question Generating strategy, students will compose their own questions to answer in their Thumbprint Autobiography.

#### Explain

Students will create an original Thumbprint Autobiography multimodal narrative using the pre-writing from the Thumbprint Autobiography handout and their own Question Generating questions.

#### Extend

Students will publish their narratives by presenting their final work in a modified Gallery Walk to their classmates.

#### Evaluate

Students will revisit their initial quickwrite and compose an additional reflective extension.

## Standards

*Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 8)*

**8.2.W.1:** Students will apply components of a recursive writing process for multiple purposes to create a focused, organized, and coherent piece of writing.

**8.2.W.2:** Students will plan (e.g., outline) and prewrite a first draft as necessary.

**8.7.W.1:** Students will select, organize, or create multimodal content that encompasses different points of view.

**8.8.W:** Students will write independently over extended periods of time (e.g., time for research, reflection, and revision) and for shorter timeframes (e.g., a single sitting or a day or two), vary their modes of expression to suit audience and task, and analyze different perspectives.

## Attachments

- [Thumbprint Autobiography - Spanish.docx](#)
- [Thumbprint Autobiography - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Thumbprint Autobiography Powerpoint Update.pptx](#)
- [Thumbprint Autobiography Student Examples - Spanish.docx](#)
- [Thumbprint Autobiography Student Examples - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Thumbprint Autobiography Student Examples.docx](#)
- [Thumbprint Autobiography Student Examples.pdf](#)
- [Thumbprint Autobiography.docx](#)
- [Thumbprint Autobiography.pdf](#)

## Materials

- Link to YouTube video
- Thumbprint Autobiography handout (for student examples see Attachments)
- White paper
- Writing materials- lead pencil with eraser, colored markers, pens, and pencils

# Engage

To begin, ask students to complete a quickwrite as a bellringer over the questions "What makes you unique? What sets you apart from everyone else and makes you, you?" Give five minutes for students to write, then ask students to share one piece of information with a partner by using the [Think-Pair-Share](#) strategy.

## Teacher's Note

To warm students up to share their quickwrite and engage in Think-Pair-Share, consider writing with students and share as well. Going further, analyze a partner's fingerprint and share what was discovered. Be sure to provide guiding suggestions to students to think about such as what is unique about their personality, goals, family, etc.

After sharing quickwrites as a whole class, ask students which part of the human body is completely unique to each individual, guiding students to the answer of fingerprints. Tell students that they will be examining their thumbprints, and invite them to become acquainted with their unique prints by watching two videos.

The first, [How to Compare Fingerprints](#), should be watched until the 1:30 mark. Pause after each fingerprint part (the delta, loop, arch, etc.), and ask students to find these elements on their own thumb. As students are examining their prints for each different part, they may want to show and compare their findings with their Think-Pair-Share partner.

The second video, [Why Are Fingerprints Unique?](#), may be watched all the way through, and simply provides more context about the human fingerprint; this will help students think deeper and further about what makes them unique.

## Teacher's Note

The combination of the quickwrite, Think-Pair-Share strategy, and two videos will serve as a brainstorming session for the multimodal narrative students will compose. The teacher should spend enough time in this Engage session to be able to refer back to these activities throughout the rest of this lesson.

## Explore

While it may seem counter-intuitive, rather than writing first, the teacher should show students how their Thumbprint Autobiography will appear. Since this is a multimodal composition, the creation of the form takes a bit of time to form. This is where the in-depth analysis of the various grooves and elements of the students' thumbprints will pay off. Here is how the format of the composition should be created:

### Teacher's Note

Before students try creating the lines of their thumbprint on their own, it is important for the teacher to model how to do it using a large Post-It, a whiteboard, or document camera to show students how the teacher transfers the lines of their thumbprint onto paper.

1. Each student should have a piece of white printer paper. Using pencil and pressing very lightly, a large oval should be drawn, taking as much of the page as possible, getting as close to all four sides as possible. This oval will serve as the border of the student's thumbprint. It is important to draw lightly, because this line will be erased later. For students who would benefit from a modification during this stage, there is a template provided on the Thumbprint Biography handout that may be printed to use or trace.
2. Once the oval is drawn, students will begin to fill it with the lines of their thumbprint. The best way to start is to find the element on the print called "the core" (shown in the first video) and to draw that. The core is the central, "main event" of the thumbprint, and is a good place to start so that all other lines can radiate from it.
3. Advise students to find any other interesting elements of their thumbprints that stick out as unique and to draw those in next. Remind students that everyone is unique and therefore their thumbprints will look very different from each other; some students may have whorls and deltas and others may not.
4. Give students time to find all fascinating elements of their thumbprint, walking around the room and assisting where needed. During this stage, the teacher will likely be performing up-close observations of student thumbprints and helping to transfer the lines to their paper. Continually remind students to draw in pencil very lightly since the lines will be eventually erased.
5. The last step is to fill in the rest of the thumbprint with lines that will hold the writing. These lines should follow the same flow as the first shapes drawn in and repeat on top of each other. The space between the lines will vary in width, but it is best to keep them similar to the width of a sheet of notebook paper. If the space is too thick, there will not be enough room to fit the content written, and if the space is too small, there will be too much space to fill and too little room to write comfortably.

### Teacher's Note

For students who are struggling with making their thumbprint "perfect", it is helpful to act as a supportive guide and remind them that the formation of the lines on the thumbprint can be very flexible. Truly, the teacher will not really know what each student's print looks like, so the real point of this formation is to draw in enough lines to hold content, not how closely the lines resemble the actual thumbprint.

Once students have completed forming their blank thumbprint, it may be set aside. Using the Thumbprint Autobiography handout (print and copy the attached handout for students to use), students will do pre-writing for this multimodal narrative by answering both the guiding questions and generating their own.

**Teacher's Note**

Until this point, students have been brainstorming and getting immersed into the theme of individuality. Moving into the stages of more concrete writing, this would be a good time for the teacher to introduce or review the narrative mode of writing, and more specifically to address that an autobiography is a work written by the author about his or herself. This autobiographical narrative will tell about the student's life experiences- highs and lows, ins and outs. Inform students that the following writing will be used to compose their narrative.

Since a narrative tells a story and an autobiography gives information about the life of the author, all content written for this composition will tell the story of the writer. Therefore, there are guiding questions that may be considered and answered on the attached Thumbprint Autobiography handout, and also the opportunity for students to engage in the [Question Generating](#) strategy to compose questions of their own to answer.

First, on a separate sheet of paper, students should write out the answers to the guiding questions in complete sentences, providing as much information as needed to tell their story. As a homework or end of day assignment, students will go a step further and generate their own questions to answer for their narrative. For this lesson, the [Question Generating](#) strategy should work like this:

**Teacher's Note**

Tell students to only write about things they don't mind sharing.

1. Give students an element of inspiration on which to focus. For this lesson, provide examples such as either guiding questions or an image of a fingerprint displayed at the front of the room.
2. Next, ask students to generate questions that pertain to their story. These should be questions that they not only would be able to answer about themselves, but would be passionate about answering. Students may start by looking for a gap in the existing guiding questions. After giving students time on their own to compose their questions, set aside time for [Think-Pair-Share](#) discussion.

# Explain

Now that students have their blank thumbprint ready to fill and the content for their autobiographical narrative written, it is time to combine the two. Using light pencil first, students will spend time filling in the lines of their thumbprint with the answers to the questions provided and generated.

## Teacher's Note

During this stage, the teacher may ask students to get even more creative by drawing symbols or pictures, or incorporating figurative language into their thumbprint. For example, a student who generated a question to answer about a sport played, may describe their basketball skills by using onomatopoeia or a simile. A student who wrote about their favorite book may draw a symbol from the text.

After all content is drawn in pencil, the writing should be gone over with permanent color or pen. There are many options to use here, including felt tip pens, colored pencils, and thin-tipped markers. Some students may choose to go over most of their words in black, and save bolder colors for specific words, symbols, or figurative language.

Remember that it was important to draw the initial lines lightly in pencil. Once all content is written in permanent ink or color, the student's last step is to go back over the initial pencil lines and erase them, leaving only the lines of their unique thumbprint formed by their story in their own words.

## Extend

As an extension, students should be provided with the opportunity to display their Thumbprint Autobiographies and to read the work of others in a modified Gallery Walk. To make this conducive to a class period and physical layout, desks may be arranged in small or large groups (one large circle also works well, if possible). Each student places his or her Thumbprint Autobiography on their desk. This activity works well with music playing; the teacher plays calming music for the period that students are reading the project in front of them, then when the music stops, they move to the next desk to read a new narrative. This modified Gallery Walk works similarly to musical chairs, except in this version the opportunity is presented for students' stories to be read and learned.

### Teacher's Note

Providing small stacks of Post-It notes around the desks works well for peers to leave positive comments on the Thumbprint Autobiographies as they are read.

### Optional Modifications For Distance Learning

If conducting this lesson in an online or distance learning environment, you may choose to omit the Gallery Walk activity. You can substitute an activity with a website such as VoiceThread. With VoiceThread, you can upload the images to the site beforehand. Then, students can choose whether they would like to make a quick video, a voice memo, or a written note to give feedback on other students' posters. [Download all attachments](#) to use this lesson in [Google Classroom](#).

## Evaluate

Students' Thumbprint Autobiographies will be evaluated using a rubric. The rubric may be modified to have specific requirements (certain number of questions answered, specific instances of figurative used, etc.). Rubrics to modify may be found [here](#).

Students will complete this lesson by returning to their first quickwrite over the questions "What makes you unique? What sets you apart from everyone else and makes you, you?" Students should revisit their writing and extend it by writing about what they learned or remembered about themselves during this process. This final reflection can simply be an extension that remains in a composition book, or it can be turned in as a full paragraph to accompany the final Thumbprint Autobiography.



## Resources

- "Create Rubrics for your Project-Based Learning Activities". Rubistar. Copyright 2000-2008, ALTEC at University of Kansas. Retrieved from [http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php?screen=CustomizeTemplate&bank\\_rubric\\_id=21&ion\\_id=5&](http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php?screen=CustomizeTemplate&bank_rubric_id=21&ion_id=5&);
- "How to Compare Fingerprints - The Basics". (2010, November 22). Fingerprint How To Channel. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IrpTqKkygA>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Google Classroom. Tech Tools. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/628>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Question Generating. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/167>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Think-Pair-Share. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/139>
- "Why Are Fingerprints Unique?". (2015, January 22). Life Noggin. YouTube Video. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-OI95dpNSM>