

Random Autobiography Poem

Begin by making some lists:

- Make a list of the towns and states you have visited or lived in. Put a note about what you saw or did there.
- List animals you've touched or petted. When? Where? What did it feel like?
- List the historic events you have witnessed. These can be neighborhood, city, state, national or international
- List things you've lost
- List some odd things you have experienced
- List places you have shopped and things you have bought
- List memorable things you have seen happen in your classroom, or with particular students
- List a few favorites, whatever comes to mind
- List places that are special to you and a few details about each.

Combining some of the opening lines below as starter dough with ideas in your lists, write and shape a poem about yourself.

- I was the expected
- I've held
- I lost
- I tell you sincerely
- Once
- Twice
- I bought
- I love
- I've been scared
- I've seen
- I'm
- I learned
- I've heard
- I've had some
- I once
- And only one
- I have
- I witnessed
- I will testify
- I have stories
- I found

Random Autobiography
by Greg Birnbaum, high school student

I have been to India
where I saw wild monkeys
climb big trees.
I have been to Yellowstone
where I saw buffalo follow
my footsteps.
I have touched dogs that bite
and snakes that kill.

I have lost trust and respect.
I have lost friends and family.
I have found hope and dreams.
I have found knowledge and wisdom.

I have seen the sun set from
Bull Mountain in Montana.
I was the expected killer
in the game of Clue.

I've held a first born baby
in my hands,
then I gave her back to my sister.

I've heard rock and rap,
oldies and new age.
I've been mean to my friends,
and then said, "I'm sorry."

I saw myself with a gun,
but didn't like the control,
and put it down.

I once gave advice to a friend
but got yelled at because
it wasn't what she wanted to hear.

I've driven through a rain storm
with my mother
sick
in the passenger seat.

Twice I lost my house keys,
only I found them hours later.

And only once have I been in love,
but now it's over,
and I'm not sure it even was.

Clips of Life
by Meredith Vickery, college student

Are there small dents I make on the world?
Its order, chaos, flow?
The dents remain instilled in me.

Burnt images inside:

Exiting the White House tour
Looking back for that last glimpse
The First Lady's reading light was on.
I saw her silhouette
Mind wandering,
immersed in words.
Did she know?

The albino alligator at the reptile prison
Alligator expert held the creature for me to
touch
Rough ridges on the back
smooth scales on the belly
Did it feel?

Driving at high speeds on the freeway.
Leading truck lets three paint cans go.
The white flies out of its aluminum
imprisonment.
Do others wonder?

Hiking through tree-filtered sunlight.
Not knowing who I was.
Not knowing what made sense
A woman hands me a card:
"He will return for his flock."
Could she read me?

Watching the eclipse of the moon,
On a dark night made black
Are others watching in the dark?
Or am I alone?