

Workshop: Narrative Thinking

by Tom Painting

Focus on a particular topic that will be the subject of a brief narrative. Topics should necessarily deal with concrete images, for example, the moon, crows, candles... etc. Once the topic is assigned, participants write their own stories related to the topic.

Writing narrative has the potential to release the rich treasury of personal memory.

Prompt: Recall a time or times you observed the moon.

Moon Narrative by Sandy Gillespie

I recall the moon reflecting on Lake Champlain, bright and shimmering across the water, from the western shore in New York State to the eastern shore in Vermont. I made several pen and ink drawings of this.

As a child in Vermont, I marveled at how the moonlight shining on the snow, lit up the night. The trees' bare branches made sculptural outlines against the white hills.

The harvest moon lit up the cemetery one Halloween night. Draped in a sheet, my ghost costume made me an easy target for the meanies. They chased me and I hid behind gravestones, scared yet thrilled, until I ran into a headstone. A nosebleed saturated my sheet and scared my mother when I finally made my way home.

When my children were young, we loved the book, *The Rice Cake Rabbit*. We still see the rabbit samurai when we look at a full moon. The book is out of print, but I'm lucky enough to have a copy.

With the completion of the narrative, the writer searches her/his text for images that may provide the foundation for haiku.

full moon
the rice cake rabbit
a samurai at last

Halloween moon
my ghost sheet
trips me

Lake Champlain
two states joined
by the harvest moon

moonlight
branches trace
 shadows on the snowy hills

Sandy Gillespie