SUMMER READING TEMPLATE:

***Handling the Truth: On the Writing of Memoir***

Important: A template is a document type that allows a person to write as much in a provided space as desired. The template adjusts as one continues to write. (This one-page template could easily become a 3- or 4-page document.) If you do not have Microsoft Office, you may download a free site that will allow you to open the templates (<http://www.openoffice.org>).

**Student Name**:

**Course**:

**Date Reading Began**:

**Date Reading Completed**:

**Title of Book**:

**Author**:

**Original Copyright Date**:

**Explanation of Title** (minimum of two sentences):

**Key Terms:** According the author, what is memoir? What is memoir not? Answer in at least 3-5 sentences total.

**Author’s Message**: List 10 pieces of advice the author provides for writing a good memoir. This list should be in complete sentences and should span the length of the book (not just from one chapter).

**Significant Quote:** Find a quote in this text that resonates with you. Provide the quote (properly cited), an explanation of the quote, and the reason the quote stands out to you.

**Vocabulary:** Find five words that are new to you. Quote and properly cite the entire sentence in which the word appears. Bold the word you have chosen. Then, provide a definition that best fits the meaning of the word as it is used in the sentence. Example: Exploits: “Two-Bit was telling me about one of his many **exploits** while we did the dishes” (121). Exploit is a noun that means “a bold or daring feat.”

**Application**: Throughout the text, the author gives many ideas for preparing to write a memoir. Select **two** from this list and write a 1½ page minimum response (total length for the two prompts). Your response should be typed and double-spaced, following all MLA guidelines. You should look back in the book, using the quote provided as a guide, to get more context for the prompt. Start your response on a new page within this same document.

**Select Two:**

* “Look outside, go outside, write this right now: The quality of breeze. The evidence of dew. The pile of clouds on the horizon. Find the words […] Write the weather of this instance; find the words. Put yourself in a weather zone, then let your mind drift back. Write the weather of your wedding day, now, or the weather of your first school day, or the weather of a funeral day, or the weather of a carefree day” (Kephart 63). Essentially, begin by describing the weather today and then reminisce on the role that weather played in a memory. Go beyond a straight-forward description.
* “Stop reading this book; put it down. Pick up a pen and write what you can see from the nearest window. Not the weather; that’s transient. Not the people; they’ll come and go […] Now close your eyes and find within yourself a landscape from long ago. Put this down, too, best as you can […] To what part of yourself, or your story, does this landscape return you?” (Kephart 73-74). Begin by describing an immediate landscape that you see and then reminisce about a particular landscape that has significance to you.
* “I cannot materially recreate a meal with words, but in sinking in with the attempt, in trying to locate the snatch of my childhood, I am shortening the distance between now and so many thens. I am rousing memory; I am working toward meaning. If we stand in the kitchen long enough […] we will have given ourselves the gift of greater content and deeper knowing” (Kephart 99). Tell a memory that is related to food. Be as vivid as possible.
* “What can you smell? What smells transport you? What smells do you associate with your childhood, and why, and how has time interceded? […] Choose a smell, and write it into your story” (Kephart 102-103). Describe a significant smell that brings you back to a certain memory.
* “So close your eyes now, and lean back. Direct your thoughts toward the first childhood room that you can remember […] Write what you remember, what you feel as you remember, what you wish that you could see but can’t” (Kephart 114). Describe your childhood room.
* “I want you- you saw this coming- to write your first memory. I’m not going to lie: This won’t be easy […] What we recall about then, what we are capable of knowing about our childhood selves, how we tell ourselves the stories, how we tell them to others- this is all part and parcel of, inextricable from, who we are right now, how we filter the world” (Kephart 124, 130). Describe your first memory.