

## Lesson Plan: Writing Personal Essays

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will learn to write a personal essay that takes on the general (broad themes) by using the specific (their lives/experiences)

**TIME:** 45 minutes (with optional 45 minute extension activity)

**MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- “Being Good for Narnia and the Lion” from *Through the Wardrobe*

**INTRODUCTION:** Personal essays are easy to write, but hard to use to make a statement about anything not, well, *personal*. A great personal essay is one that connects because it doesn’t just say something about you, it also makes a statement about people generally.

**ACTIVITY:**

**Read** “Being Good for Narnia and the Lion” in class.

**Discuss . . .**

- The impact the Chronicles of Narnia had on the author and her life.
- The “big idea” the author is taking on: why people choose to be good or evil.
- What the essayist’s personal story does for the essay: does it make it more effective? How/why?

**Brainstorm** other, similar “big ideas” and specific experiences that comment on those ideas. (You might want to come up with the “big ideas” on your own, and just enlist your class in brainstorming specific experiences.)

BIG IDEA

choosing to be good/evil

SPECIFIC EXPERIENCE

- how the Chronicles of Narnia changed the way the author saw being good

Optional Extension (45 minutes)

**Have students write** their own short personal essays based on the list you made together.