

**FREEWRTING ABOUT MEMORY**

The "memory" play is a very successful non-linear structural pattern in modern American drama. The following activity is designed to help students understand the use of and appreciate the power of memory to build structure in drama.

Close your eyes and call up the memory of one of the following:

- a happy event
- a traumatic event
- a "panoramic" account of a particular summer
- a return to a favorite place of one's childhood
- a weekend afternoon spent with family members
- an intense conversation with a parent
- the encounter of meeting someone you knew in the past

Write a 1pg. journal using free-style writing, citing specifics from your memory based the following elements:

- What are the sensory experiences embedded in the memory? i.e., Is your chosen memory mainly visual? Are you experiencing any audio recall? Tactile? Olfactory? Sense of taste?
- What dominates the memory? Is it the details of the environment? Could it be the personalities of a person or people? The dialogue? The impact of the experience on you at the time it occurred?
- Is your mind making cross-current connections simultaneously from past to present? For instance, are you weighing what kind of a person you were or how you looked then in relation to the person you are now and how you look in the present?
- Are all faces in your memory equally dominant? Or are one or two faces the main center of the recall - almost larger than life—and others subordinated in the background?
- Do you remember all the names of people surfacing in the memory? Or do the names of just one or two who appear in your mind stream?
- Is your memory in color or black and white? If in color, are some colors more vibrant than others are?
- Is there any special focus in your memory on a real object; for instance, a painting, a sofa, a car, a swing on a playground?

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- Does something in the initial memory kick you off into a whole new memory? What do you think is the trigger?