

Complete Autobiography Template

Fill in each section to create your autobiography's first draft

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Your Autobiography's Working Title:

Your Main Purpose: (Why are you writing this?)

Your Intended Audience:

Target Length: _____ words/pages

Central Theme or Question:

INTRODUCTION

Opening Hook

Choose your hook style: ☐ Vivid scene from a pivotal moment ☐ Provocative question
☐ Surprising statement or fact ☐ Meaningful quote ☐ Compelling anecdote

Write your opening (2-3 sentences):

Background Context

Essential background information readers need:

Where and when you were born:

Family structure:

Cultural/geographic context:

Socioeconomic context (if relevant):

Thesis/Central Statement

What is this autobiography really about? (Your main argument, insight, or journey in 2-3 sentences)

Preview (Optional)

Briefly preview the major sections or themes:

CHAPTER/SECTION 1: Early Life & Formation

Chapter Title:

Opening Scene or Statement

Begin this section with:

Early Childhood

Your earliest significant memory:

Description of your childhood home/environment:

Important family relationships:

Mother/maternal figure:

Father/paternal figure:

Siblings:

Other significant family members:

Formative Experiences

Experience 1: What happened:

Your age: _____

Impact on you: _____

Experience 2: What happened:

Your age: _____

Impact on you: _____

Experience 3: What happened:

Your age: _____

Impact on you: _____

Early Personality/Interests

How would you describe yourself as a child?

What were you passionate about or interested in?

What challenges did you face?

Reflection on This Period

Looking back, what do you understand now about this time that you didn't then?

CHAPTER/SECTION 2: Adolescence & Development

Chapter Title:

Transition

How did you move from childhood to adolescence?

School/Education

Your educational experience:

Influential teachers or mentors:

Academic interests or struggles:

Social Development

Friendships and peer relationships:

First experiences with romantic relationships (if relevant):

Social challenges or triumphs:

Identity Formation

Questions you were grappling with about yourself:

How you saw yourself vs. how others saw you:

Cultural, racial, or other identity factors:

Pivotal Moment/Turning Point

Describe a key moment during adolescence that changed you:

How did this moment change your trajectory?

Reflection

What patterns from this period still affect you today?

CHAPTER/SECTION 3: Young Adulthood & Independence

Chapter Title:

Transition to Adulthood

How did you move into adult life?

Education/Training

College, vocational training, or other paths:

Major decisions about education or career:

Career Beginnings

First jobs or career steps:

What you learned from early work experiences:

Relationships

Significant relationships during this period:

How relationships shaped you:

Independence & Challenges

First experience living independently:

Major challenges faced:

How you handled these challenges:

Key Achievement or Milestone

Describe an important achievement or milestone:

Why it mattered:

Reflection

What did you learn about yourself during this period?

CHAPTER/SECTION 4: [Major Life Event/Theme]

Chapter Title:

Setup

What was happening in your life leading up to this event/period?

The Event/Period in Detail

Describe what happened: (Use as much space as needed)

Your Response

How did you react initially?

What emotions did you experience?

What actions did you take?

Impact on Your Life

Immediate consequences:

Long-term effects:

How it changed your perspective:

Key People

Who helped or hindered during this time?

Lessons Learned

What did this experience teach you?

Reflection

With the benefit of hindsight, how do you understand this period now?

CHAPTER/SECTION 5: [Another Major Period/Theme]

Chapter Title:

Context

When and where does this section take place?

What was your life situation?

Main Content

The story of this period: (Expand as needed)

Key Moments Within This Period

Moment 1:

Moment 2:

Moment 3:

Challenges and Growth

Obstacles you faced:

How you overcame them (or didn't):

Personal growth that resulted:

Reflection

What does this period mean in the larger arc of your life?

CHAPTER/SECTION 6: [Current Life/Recent Period]

Chapter Title:

Where You Are Now

Current situation:

Current relationships:

Current work/pursuits:

Current location:

Recent Developments

What has happened recently:

Integration of Past and Present

How your past has shaped your present:

Patterns you recognize:

Ways you've changed:

Ways you've stayed the same:

Current Challenges

What you're working through now:

Current Joys

What brings you satisfaction or happiness:

CONCLUSION

Reflection on the Journey

Looking back at your entire life story, what strikes you most?

Central Insight

What is the main lesson or understanding you've gained?

Who You've Become

Describe who you are now:

How is this different from who you were?

Unresolved Questions

What questions or mysteries remain?

Looking Forward

What are you moving toward?

What hopes do you have for the future?

Final Thought

End with a powerful statement, image, or reflection that brings closure:

ADDITIONAL SECTIONS (Optional)

Section A: [Additional Theme or Period]

Title: _____

Content:

Reflection:

Section B: [Additional Theme or Period]

Title: _____

Content:

Reflection:

THEMATIC THREADS (Optional)

Use this section to track themes that run throughout your life:

Theme 1:

How this shows up in childhood:

How this shows up in adolescence:

How this shows up in adulthood:

Current relationship to this theme:

Theme 2:

How this shows up in childhood:

How this shows up in adolescence:

How this shows up in adulthood:

Current relationship to this theme:

Theme 3:

How this shows up in childhood:

How this shows up in adolescence:

How this shows up in adulthood:

Current relationship to this theme:

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Track important people and their impact on your story:

Person 1:

Relationship to you: _____

Time period(s) in your life: _____

Their influence:

Key moment with them:

Person 2:

Relationship to you: _____

Time period(s) in your life: _____

Their influence:

Key moment with them:

Person 3:

Relationship to you: _____

Time period(s) in your life: _____

Their influence:

Key moment with them:

PIVOTAL MOMENTS SUMMARY

List all the turning points in your life:

1. Age: _____ Event: _____ Impact: _____

2. Age: _____ Event: _____ Impact: _____

3. Age: _____ Event: _____ Impact: _____

4. Age: _____ Event: _____ Impact: _____

5. Age: _____ Event: _____ Impact: _____

6. Age: _____ Event: _____ Impact: _____

SENSORY MEMORIES

Capture specific sensory details to enrich your narrative:

Smells associated with childhood:

Sounds from an important period:

Tastes connected to memories:

Textures or physical sensations:

Visual images that stayed with you:

DIALOGUE TO INCLUDE

Note important conversations or statements you want to incorporate:

1. Who said it: _____ What they
said: _____ Context:

2. Who said it: _____ What they
said: _____ Context:

3. Who said it: _____ What they
said: _____ Context:

VALUES & BELIEFS EVOLUTION

Track how your values have evolved:

Value 1:

Early understanding:

How it was challenged:

Current understanding:

Value 2:

Early understanding:

How it was challenged:

Current understanding:

Value 3:

Early understanding:

How it was challenged:

Current understanding:

SCENES TO DEVELOP

List scenes you want to expand into full narrative:

Scene 1: _____	Why it
matters: _____	
Scene 2: _____	Why it
matters: _____	
Scene 3: _____	Why it
matters: _____	
Scene 4: _____	Why it
matters: _____	
Scene 5: _____	Why it
matters: _____	

RESEARCH/VERIFICATION NEEDED

Note facts you need to verify:

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
-

NEXT STEPS

After completing this template:

Immediate Actions: - ☐ Review what you've written - ☐ Identify gaps that need more detail - ☐ Decide on final structure/order of sections - ☐ Choose which sections to expand first - ☐ Set writing schedule for full draft

Sections that need more work:

Sections that feel complete:

Your biggest challenge in writing this:

Your next writing session will focus on:

TEMPLATE USAGE TIPS

Getting Started: 1. Don't worry about perfect writing in this template 2. Use bullet points

if full sentences feel overwhelming 3. Skip sections that don't apply to your story 4. Add extra sections if needed 5. Focus on getting ideas down first

Working Through: - Save frequently - Come back multiple times to add details - Don't force memories that won't come - Let one memory trigger others - Write what you remember, even if chronology is unclear

After Completing: - This is your roadmap, not your final draft - Use this to write full narrative sections - Reorder sections as needed - Expand scenes that matter most - Cut or condense less important parts

Remember: - This template is flexible—adapt it to your story - Not every blank needs filling - You can completely reorder sections - The goal is generating content, not perfection - You'll revise and refine later

WORD COUNT TRACKER

Current template completion: _____ words

Target for full draft: _____ words

Sections completed: ____ / ____

Estimated completion date: _____

NOTES & IDEAS

Use this space for anything that doesn't fit elsewhere:
