

Developmental Journal: Sample

(Note: there are many ways to do this -- "dear diary", as someone eulogizing you after your death, a long narrative, etc. You can include dates as headers to different sections... or not. It may be convenient to insert the "required parts" as you write or you may choose to not interrupt the flow of your writing and insert them as "asides" -- perhaps as block-indent or in a different font. To make sure you have the required parts, it may be helpful to label them as you address them, such as I did in parentheses, below.)

November 6, 1979; Freehold, New Jersey

It was election day; Mom and my three older siblings had the day off from school. As I've always heard the story, I'm not sure where my brother was, but my mom and my sisters were supposed to go clothes shopping. Just as they were about to leave, Mom's water broke. No shopping trip today. Dad came home from work and my grandmother came over to stay with my siblings. Mom wasn't in labor yet, but it was an hour drive to the hospital, so they didn't waste any time.

Mom talks about her pregnancy with me in pretty happy terms: she enjoyed being pregnant and was never morning-sick. Keeping track of three kids was tiring, but she claims they were good and eager helpers -- they loved the fact that Mom couldn't bend down to pick up things and happily did her bidding. Mom was pretty well-informed about childbirth issues. (I was, after all, the fourth. Mom always wanted an even number of kids, so I know I was planned!) She took prenatal vitamins, never smoked, drank or took as much as an aspirin. Because of Mom's age, she had an amniocentesis, which was new technology at the time; I was also the only child for whom she had an ultrasound -- it wasn't even available for the other three! She is a staunch advocate of natural childbirth and I, like my siblings, was to be born without any drugs. She fought hard for this right -- even switching hospitals last minute when she and a doctor had a disagreement, which is why they had the long drive ahead.

Mom's labor was short -- under 4 hours and, so the story goes, I just "flew" out. Mom said, "tell me when to push" and Dad said, "she's already out." Mom always says that after my brother (a 10-pounder), delivering me was a cinch. My father always called me the "peanut"; at 7 lbs. 14 oz, I was the smallest of my siblings. My two older sisters and my brother came to see me at the hospital and I was home amidst the chaos in a few days. I was named "Elizabeth Joann", after my two grandmothers, a name I treasure to this day. (birth story)

I was a happy baby with a mess of curly brown hair and an easy-going disposition. As the youngest, I was showered with attention by my older siblings and I thought the world of them. I remember my dad traveling a lot when I was young. I hated to see him leave. I can remember once -- I must have been about three -- sitting at the top of the stairs, watching Dad leave and crying. My sister Margaret comforted me by making up a song about me and my brother (three years older than I) to cheer me up. To this day, I can sing that song -- I admired my brother intensely. (First memory)

OK -- do you get the idea?