

Student says:

This essay is a narrative essay written by the late Frank McCourt, author of books, such as *Angela's Ashes* and *Teacher Man*. This essay is actually an excerpt from McCourt's book, *Teacher Man*.

In this short narrative, you can see how the author tells a story to make a very important point about teachers and students.

The author begins his story with a smaller story about a student submitting a note explaining his absence. The note was signed by the student's mother. It is only in the next paragraph that the audience finds out the student wrote the letter himself and his teacher, Frank McCourt, watched him do it.

This hook gets the audience's attention, and it becomes clear this narrative is not going to present a traditional thesis statement. The author is simply telling a story, which will also make a point.

The fourth paragraph is just one sentence long. McCourt writes, "I was having an epiphany." The author doesn't yet tell us what this epiphany is, but the audience knows this story is going to reveal something important.

McCourt uses traditional elements of narrative to tell his story, such as dialogue.

This dialogue helps engage the audience and reveal the story without the author having to tell the story. In a narrative argument, a good writer will "show" the story instead of just "telling" the story, and dialogue helps with this.

The last paragraph of the narrative reveals the argument of the story. McCourt writes that his students said that school should be like this every day with note writing and singing. Essentially, school should be fun.

McCourt had his students write excuse notes for famous people, and the students enjoyed the assignment. McCourt's supervisor did not approve. In this story, McCourt makes a clear argument that learning should be fun and build upon what students know. He also makes it clear that outside forces make this kind of learning difficult.