

## COAIC Personal Exploration and Research

### Instructions:

#### - Part 0:

Create a cover that contains a title that reflects a general concept or idea found within your writing. Your cover should also contain your name, course, instructor name and general date of submission. (Month/Year)

#### - Part 1 (*See length requirement below*)

It will be your responsibility to choose 3 stories from this book. Using these stories, you will be asked to explore your own experiences via the given prompt. For each of your chosen stories, you will also be required to find a resource (person, print/ media, arts, history, etc) that can give your personal experience a larger context of the that time/place your experiences came from.

**Part 1a Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages)**

**Part 1b External Connection: (2 pages)**

#### - Part 2 (4 Pages each)

For each of the three stories that you have chosen, you will create a 4-page piece of writing that combines the explorative writing and the research writing you created for each of those stories. This piece of writing should weave the information that you find in your media, interview, and reference sources into your telling of your own experience. This expansion will primarily be a retelling of the above two pieces of writing, but must be created IN ADDITION TO the two papers above. Simply copying and pasting the two writings together does not constitute a combining of the two pieces of writing. You do not have to start writing again from scratch, but you must make sure that the two separate pieces of writing flow together and do not awkwardly move from one to the other and back again.

Use proper MLA formats to cite all of your sources within this 4-page paper. You may use a works cited page, but you must use at least one in-text citation as well.

#### - Part 3 (1 page each)

For each of your chosen stories, you must relate your own writing to the Haslam story. This comparison should explore the similarities and differences between the way that your personal experiences and cultural/place/group upbringing lead to different world-views. Use specific cited examples from the Haslam story when creating this.

#### - Misc

All papers must be typed, 12pt font, Times New Roman, 1” Margins, Footnotes 9pt font (if used)

Your final packet will look like this.

- Cover Page
- Part 2 Story A (4 pages)
- Part 2 Story B (4 Pages)
- Part 2 Story C (4 Pages)
- Part 3 Story A (1 pages)
- Part 3 Story B (1 Pages)
- Part 3 Story C (1 Pages)
- Part1 Story A (2+2 Pages)
- Part1 Story B (2+2 Pages)
- Part1 Story C (2+2 Pages)

# The Stories

Pop:

***General Summary:***

Haslam compares his fathers ailing health to his father when he was younger in his prime.

***Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages):***

What is the Father/Mother figure in your own life? How do you understand them today versus how you understand who they were when they were younger? How do you see the experiences of your Father/Mother figure in your own actions and beliefs?

***External Connection (2 pages):***

Interview 1: You must first interview someone who has knowledge about a past experience in your Father/Mother figure's life that defined who he or she is to you. This interview should have at least 5 open ended questions before beginning the interview. You will be required to transcribe the responses along with the questions written out.

Interview 2: You must then create 5 open-ended questions that are based upon the responses about the experience in your Father/Mother's life that you discussed from your first interview. You must then interview your father/mother figure. Transcribe these questions and answers.

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## Bruin, Brownies, and Unions:

### ***General Summary:***

Haslam discusses a shared experience with family that marked a rite of passage that allowed him to raise his perception of place in the hierarchy of family.

### ***Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages):***

Write about a family experience within the last 5 years of your life that represented a change in your place in the family. This should be something that makes you have “I’m a big boy/girl now!” style memory.

### ***External Connection (2 page):***

Find a media at least 2 media reports/pieces about the general experience your experience falls into. (Ex. If you chose hunting on your own as an experience, find media concerning kids hunting, or opinion articles about the same thing. Hard reference sources can give you statistics as well.)

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## An Affair of Love:

### **General Summary:**

Haslam follows the change in his relationship with his mother from her strong-willed youth, to her late-aged dementia.

### **Individual Exploration Prompt (2 Pages):**

Look at the aging members of your own chosen family/guardians. Write about experiences you've had with one (or more) that chronicle their extreme eccentricities, mental/emotional disability, and/or dementia/Alzheimer's. What are the stories and experiences that you've shared that show who they are both negatively and positively?

### **External Connection (2 pages):**

Research your chosen family member's extreme eccentricities, mental/emotional disability, and/or dementia/Alzheimer's. Use at least two media sources and one face-to-face interview (3 sources total). Create paper of at least **4 pages** that weaves together your personal stories about your chosen family member and your research on that topic.

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## Coming of Age in California:

### ***General Summary:***

Haslam discusses the merging tributaries of culture and experience that leads to his personal sense of self. He introduces the idea of “two California’s” where there is the fantasy/desired perspective and the reality/experienced perspective.

### ***Individual Exploration Prompt: (2 pages):***

Consider an area of California that you have a strong connection to. What are the differing groups and worldviews that created your perception and experience about that place? What was the specific tangible or perceived change that resulted in their arrival? Why did they come to your chosen area as opposed to anywhere else? Based upon the differing experiences, how did their expectations change how they treated that area? Was there a difference between the ideas of those that moved there versus those that have been born there? Are their hierarchies of groups in that area, people that think they are better and others for no tangible reason?

### ***External Connection 2 pages:***

Based upon your explorations and defining of your area, find specific stories and recorded histories about the differing experiences that make up this area. This sort of information can be found in census data, newspaper editorials, oral histories, historical texts, etc. You must find at least 4 sources of information that relate to your specific explorations and understandings from the above writing. Each source should have its information as well as an explanation of how it relate to the specific stories of your own writing.

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## A Lesson From Home:

### ***General Summary:***

Haslam recounts his literary and quasi-literary experiences with those from his hometown and home culture. This comes across in his repetition of the phrase, “School don’t teach you everything.”

### ***Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages):***

Describe a group that you belong to that is not seen as the best by the authorities in your life (this can be parents, job, school, police, government...) Define and explain the various ways this group is considered to be negative or unimportant by those authorities. Once you have explained their point, you will now give your own and your group’s point of view as to why those reasons given by the authorities are incorrect or miss the point. You should be able to explain why the individual and world-view experience of you and your group prove the worth and positivity of your group.

### ***External Connection (2 pages):***

Find real-world examples of both points of view about the actions or beliefs of the group you belong to. You should attempt to find multiple recorded perceptions about the same event or concept in order to truly isolate the differing perception that are created by differing life experiences that either side brings to the table. These examples should come from print/visual media. Interview is not allowed as a source in this case.

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## “There Will Never Be Another You”:

(Note. You may not use the same person for this story as in “Denouement”)

### ***General Summary:***

Haslam tells the story of his first real love as well as the depression and heartache that followed. All of this is driven by a song that reminds him of this time of his life.

### ***Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages):***

Recount your own story that follows your first truly emotional relationship you’ve had with another person. This relationship should also have an emotional downfall in its end. This piece of writing should also consider the social and proximity reasons for this relationship occurring. Consider the growth that came from both the positive as well as the negative (there must be both, no matter how bitter you may be, you must allow yourself to find a positive, no matter how much you want to discount it.)

### ***External Connection (2 pages):***

Consider some songs that were important to you both during and after your relationships. Using the lyrics from these songs, show the specific connections that you made between the lyrics and your own experiences. You must also find at least one source that explains the artist’s own definition of the meaning of the song.

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## Brother's Boy:

### ***General Summary:***

Haslam recounts his personal development in Catholic private schools. He connects this to a larger brotherhood of people that are still connected to each other because they have been through that shared experience.

### ***Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages):***

What line of belonging runs through you that draws you together with other people? Where did this come from? This will come out as a shared experience that is often attached to an established group. (EX: religious group, extra-curricular activity, etc) What are the specific things that create these connections? Haslam shows the experiences he had with the teachers at his school as a way of showing the shared experiences that built the bonds that held this group together long after they left the school itself. You must find these tangible experiences that have been shared by those in the past as well as those in the future that will make them a part of you just as much as you are a part of those that came before you.

### ***External Connection (2 pages):***

Find the history of this group, Like Haslam's story, find a specific historical story from a media source. This story should show the effect that this group has upon both the character and the tangible life of the person belonging to your group. You must find at least two different sources for this information.

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## Portrait of a Pal:

### ***General Summary:***

Haslam tells about his friend Raymie. His story follows the path of an important member of his life that goes through changes that may be considered positive or negative depending upon the point of view of the person judging.

### ***Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages):***

Two parts: tell about a friend that has become more (or less) than they once seemed AND tell about how you have become more (or less) either because of them or in spite of them. Your telling of this story **MUST** involve an exploration of the effects of culture and place in the events of your experiences. (EX: Growing up in Compton yields different worldviews and expectations for someone than growing up in Blackhawk, etc)

### ***External Connection (2 pages):***

Find sources of information that talk about the connection (both historically and present day) between the place/group that you and/or your friend grew up in and the way that your/their life changed. Find specific facts and figures as well as authoritative analysis of the cause and effects of these specific parts of that upbringing.

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## Reflections from an Irrigation Ditch:

*(This selection has a slightly different final requirement as explained below)*

### **General Summary:**

Haslam uses a variety of metaphors and symbols to represent the connection of his family history to the earth and land as well as the separation of his own life from that land and history. (Examples of these metaphors are the potato, class rings, and cancerous legion on his chest from the farm chemicals.)

### **Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages):**

Attempt to find symbols and metaphors that represent the differing perceptions of your culture and upbringing that others may have compared to your own. This is best done by looking for tangible objects and acts that people outside of you see differently than you do. The Uncle and Haslam saw the potato in this story differently. By tasting good to one and bad to the other, it could be used to represent ones connection and the others lack of connection to the earth. For your own writing, discover and/ or create at least five (5) metaphoric symbols that do a similar thing for your own upbringing. Each symbol must have a explanation of its meaning to the outsider and the insider of your world as well as an explanation as to why this difference exists.

### **External Connection (2 pages):**

Choose at least three of your metaphors and find a general understanding of yourself that applies to each. (Ex. Potato, ring, cancer revolve around being connected and separated from the earth) For these three (3)+ metaphors, attempt (and succeed) to find a story that shows both perspectives of these metaphoric symbols. (Similar to the events that Haslam shared.) These stories can be found (and cited) via personal interview, online and print media, as well as visual media.

### **Final Expansion (4 pages):**

*Create a first person narrated story involving your life experiences that utilizes those three metaphoric symbols that you created in your above writing. Use Haslam's story as an example. This story should present your worldview via these metaphors as well as the opposing worldviews of those who have not had the same experiences as you.*

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## Bloodrites:

### ***General Summary:***

Haslam tells the story of his time playing Football and uses it as a metaphor for the dueling nature of his own personal growth.

### ***Individual Exploration Prompt 2 pages:***

Thinking about coming of age experiences in your own life? What is the “violent” aspect of that event? What is the dividing line between those that sort of do it and those that are true participants? Consider the experiences that made you interested in this: family, friends, culture, and place of living. This does not need to be a sport necessarily. It can be a group activity as well. For example, music, boy scouts, dancing, arts, nature based activities. What matters is that there is a perceived dividing line as explained above.

### ***External Connection (2 pages):***

Examine the history (meaning, find information from media, anecdotal, or reference sources) of this activity that you are a part of. What are its roots in the group that led you to become involved in this sport? This should not be a report about what the activity is, but rather should be research into where it came from and why it came. Consider important figures, as well as social and historical situations that correspond to its rise or fall in popularity.

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## Growing Up at Babes:

### ***General Summary:***

Haslam shares stories about local gym owner “Babe,” and explains his philosophy of judging each person you meet individually instead of by the group that they were associated with.

### ***Individual Exploration Prompt 2 pages:***

What were at least four (4) experiences of your life that you were treated/ judged as a member of a group instead of individually? Give specific details of the experiences that show both the treatment as well as the situations where these experiences took place.

### ***External Connection 2 pages:***

Research the group or groups that you are part of (or were perceived to be part of.) How are these groups defined by events and historical events? Use print/visual media to place these perceptions of

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## Homage to Uncle Willie:

### ***General Summary:***

Haslam recounts the importance of his uncle by writing many small stories that told about important moments in Haslam's experiences that created his perception of who his uncle was.

### ***Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages):***

Choose a figure (one that is not either of your parents) that has been a large part of helping you develop your sense of self in the world. Decide upon at least six (6) specific scenes or experiences that show the important effect that this person has had upon you. Do more than explain why these scenes had importance to you; describe the specific and tangible details of these experiences that lead you to have these internal understandings? (EX: Instead of saying that your older brother taught you that a man always stands up for what he believes in, tell the story of his standing up to five guys when they were acting out of turn. The showing of the story allows the reader to understand its meaning before you have to tell them. Cool, huh?

### ***External Connection (2 pages):***

Find a source that is not yourself that can give you additional information about the specific experiences that you have explored in the six stories above. These sources can be interview or any media that may be available to you. Record this information and separate it to correspond to each specific story.

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## A Personal Cancer:

### **General Summary:**

Haslam tells a heartwarming story about prostate cancer. Weeeee!

### **Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages):**

Choose a medical condition that you or someone immediately close to you has suffered. Your telling of this story should give the history of this medical condition from cause to victory over it or of succumbing to it. Be sure that every emotional understanding about yourself that this experience gave you is accompanied with a specific story that uses tangible description to show the intended emotional meaning to the reader.

### **External Connection (2 pages):**

Much like in Haslam's story, do research into this disease. Do not be too concerned with the mechanics of the condition itself except for how it effects the afflicted's view of themselves and the views of others about them. Focus your research to examining the general type of experience those that suffer this disease often have. Consider as well the type of person more or less likely to suffer this condition based upon culture, where they live, lifestyle, etc. Find at least three different sources for this research.

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## Fleas on Board:

### **General Summary:**

Having a pet becomes more than simply taking care of a life.

### **Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages):**

Follow the course of pets in your own family. Create more than simply a timeline, create a familial connection line. Weave small and large, momentary and long-term members of your household together. Examine the meaning or lack of meaning that you find in those things. Give examples that show the importance of these animals that is beyond simply that of an animal.

### **External Connection (2 pages):**

Based upon the type of pet that you have talked about find out the connection between that animal and your culture/ place of living/ or other grouping. Find out if there is a common animal for this group you find yourself part of, how does this animal reflect historical experiences of that group? If your animal is different from this group's common pet choice, what group finds your pet to be more "common?" Look for any possible merging between that culture and your own.

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## Denouement:

(Note. You may not use the same person for this story as in “There Will Never Be Another Like You”)

### ***General Summary:***

Haslam shares his experiences learning about what “love” is between him and his wife.

### ***Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages):***

Share your own story about yourself and a person that you have loved even though people in your life did not agree (and attempted to change your mind) with your choice to love this person. Explore not only the relationship, but also the factors that led to its creation. Focus on worldviews and activities that relate to your upbringing and how that helped or hurt the development of this relationship.

### ***External Connection (2 pages):***

Interview individuals from both sides of the experience. One voice should be of the person that you loved or someone that supported that love. The other voice that will be interviewed will be someone that did not agree with the relationship. Transcribe these interviews. You must also create a question flowchart that shows that you have given thought as to how to guide your questions to the topic you want as well as to expose any questions as close-ended rather than the desired question type of open-ended.

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## *Writing About Home:*

### ***General Summary:***

Haslam combats the idea that his home is not a place of artistic and academic worth. He presents the idea that there is a difference between conventional and authentic creative and intellectual expression.

### ***Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages):***

Consider something that is done by your culture/ place of living/ social class/ etc that represents a creative or academic expression that outsiders view as unimportant. Show how this expression meets the standards of the rest of the world through the filter of your group's worldview. Use tangible experiences to reinforce your assertion of your claim. (EX: one might argue that graffiti is an artistic and political expression of community reclamation of common space from outside economic forces)

### ***External Connection (2 pages):***

Find outside sources that agree and disagree with your claim. These sources must be print/visual media or reference texts. Personal interviews will not satisfy this requirement. Personal interviews can be incorporated into the Individual Exploration if desired.

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## A Braided Californian:

### ***General Summary:***

Haslam talks about his own “braided” heritage and ethnicity and explores how that intermixing in our Californian culture defines much of how we experience and interpret the world around us.

### ***Individual Exploration Prompt (2 pages):***

Discuss your own intermixed cultural heritage. This mixing does not need to be solely racial. This mixing of cultures can be seen as religious, ideological, living in one place versus another, or social class. In this writing, you should explore not only the benefits each aspect of your mixture gives you but also the difficulties that it produces as well. These things should be shown with specific experiences.

### ***External Connection (2 pages):***

Find print/visual media that discuss the same cultural mixing that you detail in the writing above. Take experiences and facts from these sources that reinforce your own experiences as well as experiences and facts that dispute the commonality of your own experiences. You must also find a source that relates the relationship between this mixing to where you come from (both culturally and physically.)

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