

The following includes some of the many structures or forms used to write micro-memoir. By no means is this an exhaustive list. You are not required to write using each of these structures, but I suggest you try out a number of them. It may take your writing to unexpected places.

## List

- A list of related items that combine to tell a story.
- [“Where I’m From”](#) by George Ella Lyon

## Scene

- A mini-story with a beginning, middle, and end that takes place in one location.
- [“Three Oranges”](#) by Tami Mohamed Brown in *Brevity*

## Dialogue

- A story written substantially in dialogue and includes minimal explanation, description, etc.
- “Bad Break” by Beth Ann Fennelly, page 51 of *Heating & Cooling*

## Research

- A story that is not based solely on first-hand experience but relies on research
- [“When a 17-Year-Old Checkout Clerk in Small Town Michigan Hits on Me, I Think about the Girl I Loved at 17”](#) by Krys Malcolm Belc in *Brevity*

## Image/Photograph

- A story that revolves around an image of some kind (from television, painting, magazine, etc.) or a photograph that leads to a story.
- [“Dead Babies Photo”](#) by Tammie M. Kennedy in *Brevity*

## Topical

- A story that revolves around a particular topic, supported by multiple experiences.
- [“Bear Fragments”](#) by Christine Byl in *Brevity*

## Segmented

- A story told in parts/pieces that combine to tell a larger story.
- “Nine Months in Madison” by Beth Ann Fennelly, pages 55-58 of *Heating & Cooling*

## Present tense

- A piece where the main storyline is told in present tense.
- [“Alive”](#) by Laurie Lynn Drummond in *Brevity*

## Hermit crab

- A story that uses a form, such as a quiz, resume, legal document, etc., as a shell that holds the text.
- [“Hairy Credentials”](#) by Nicole Cyrus in *Brevity*

## Visual

- A story presented in a visual manner outside the typical sentence and paragraph structure, which usually has more blank/white space.
- “I Was Not Going to Be Your Typical” by Beth Ann Fennelly, pages 28-29 of *Heating & Cooling*

## Profile

- A story that is a profile of a person, place, or thing, a written portrait of the subject.
- [“Daddy Vérité”](#) by Susan Jackson Rodgers in *Brevity*

## Braided

- A story that weaves two or more topics together into one whole.
- [“Fish”](#) by Nicole Walker in *Brevity*

## Single sentence

- A story told in one sentence, short or long, that creatively uses punctuation to string it all together.
- “Why I’m Switching Salons” by Beth Ann Fennelly, page 30 of *Heating & Cooling*
- [Complete Sentence](#) has a website full of one-sentence micro-memoirs.

## Second person

- A story told using *you*, second person.
- [“If You Find a Mouse in a Glue Trap”](#) by Suzanne Farrell Smith in *Brevity*

## Third person

- A story told using third person, *he/she/we/they*.
- [“The Father”](#) by Mary Jones in *Brevity*

## Super-short

- A story told in fifty-five words (nano), thirty words (postcard), or less.
- “Returning From Spring Break, Junior Year at Notre Dame” by Beth Ann Fennelly, page 39 of *Heating & Cooling*

## Graphic

- A story told in pictures as well as words.
- [“Perdition”](#) by Kristen Radtke in *Brevity*

## Found

- A story more compiled than written that takes bits and pieces of text from different sources—newspaper or magazine articles, street signs, sticky notes, letters, billboards, journals, graffiti, advertisements, shopping lists, web pages, conversations, anywhere where words are found—and combines them into a piece that tells a story.
- [“Women These Days”](#) by Amy Butcher in *Brevity*