**Stream of Consciousness**

**Definition**

Stream of Consciousness is a style of writing, where the narrator seems to be putting down his thoughts, unedited, as quickly as they come into his head. It is a pure first person.

**Example**

The following example is written in stream of consciousness:

And the band started playing one of those really slow songs, like "Stairway to Heaven" or "Freebird" that probably have really great lyrics or something but the song itself just is awful-just awful. Then this real phony guy, with the hair all slicked back on the top of his head stood up with the Sax and did a solo. I almost died. I mean, almost completely died right there. It had to be the cheesiest solo I had ever heard. I mean he was swaying back and forth and he closed his eyes like he was really getting into it and all, but it was the fakest thing you ever heard. It was like something out of a bad Howard Johnson's. I swear, he must record Muzak for a living or drive a forklift or something.

Old Jean was getting into it, though. She was humming along and swaying to the song and practically just swaying her own dance out there. I mean I'm a pretty good dancer but I hate slow songs. There's nothing you can do except just sit there and hold her and move her around and wait for the song to end. I would have rather just sat down and ordered another drink and waited for something else but not old Jean. She wanted to dance everything. Up real close to, so I could smell her breath. She didn't smell bad or anything. Don't get me wrong, she just didn't smell quite right. I mean girls should smell a certain way-like baby powder, new clothes and perfume. Something that was girlish, y'know. Jean, I swear, smelled like a fruit salad or Old Spice. I hate Old Spice. I mean I like Jean fine, y'know. She's great, but I just couldn't smell her.

Christ, I must be nuts. All of a sudden I start to imagine myself as the old sailor in the Old Spice commercial. Right out there on the dance floor. I start to think about coming home from the sea and bringing in the duffel and that song. It must have been the goddammed saxophone because that goddam song is running through my head "Dum dum de dum dum, dum di de dum dum da di dum dum" I see myself coming home to this really cute girl and wearing a sailor suit or something. I'm crazy. I mean, I'm really nuts sometimes.

**Assignment: The Internal Dialogue**

Admit it, you talk to yourself. I talk to myself all the time. In fact, I get paid to talk to myself. So maybe when you talk to yourself, you’re not talking out loud, but you’re talking to yourself in your head. That’s really what stream of consciousness is all about: capturing that conversation you have with yourself in your head, and setting it down on paper.

Maybe the conversation is really important: you have to make a life and death decision, you have to do something that may or may not allow you to graduate, you have to do something that may cost your family a lot of money, or you have to make a decision which may impact future generations of
your family. Or maybe the conversation is weighing the benefits and consequences of eating your eggs over-easy instead of scrambled.

Or maybe it gets really complicated: the conversation seems silly and frivolous, but leads to a life-changing epiphany.

Write down one of these conversations. Unlike the last assignment, I’m looking for a definite minimum length: At least one page, single spaced (which would be two pages, double-spaced, duh, but I know someone will ask the question, so I figure I might as well answer it now, even though I know you all are competent enough to figure it out your own, at least I think you are, or rather assume that you are, but I suppose I shouldn’t make assumptions about people. I suppose someone might even be silly enough to ask if I want it in MLA format or something, which would be ridiculous because obviously I just said it could be single OR double-spaced, and MLA format is ALWAYS double spaced, which means I don’t really care if it’s in MLA format, APA format, or OMFG format, so long as you do your work, and turn it in. And I suppose I’ll get someone who’ll turn in three-fourths of a page of wide-ruled notebook paper with a huge tear along the corner written in yellow colored pencil utilizing two lines to write the words like you had to do in kindergarten, “double space” it as he or she might see fit and therefore fill up both sides of the paper in ten words. So should I even include TURNITIN.COM in the directions? I mean, we already had that conversation in class, that we were going to create a portfolio and turn in all of our writing assignments on TURNITIN.COM, but I know people will ask, and then the person who wrote ten words on two sides of a half-ripped piece of wide-ruled notebook paper [speaking of half-ripped, I wonder why he only wrote ten words] will want to know how he is going to post his conversation to TURNITIN.COM since he wrote it in yellow colored pencil and didn’t type it, because obviously it would be too imposing upon him to try to decode his own writing that he doesn’t remember and does or does not make any logical sense or maybe even doesn’t form any legible words, and type it himself. I mean it would be totally, TOTALLY unfair if this person had to do the whole assignment twice because he wrote it first instead of paying attention and uploading it to TURNITIN.COM the first time, but no, I’ve got it out for this person. I’m going to make him do every assignment at least twice, probably lose his assignments on purpose and delete it off TURNITIN.COM just so he’ll have to do the assignment four times because you know that after hand-writing it, then typing it, then losing it, he’ll hand-write it out again and then get in an argument with me about why he should be able to hand write it anyways and not have to upload it to TURNITIN.COM.

Mmmm skittles.)