This Is a Photograph of Me
By Margaret Atwood

It was taken some time ago.
At first it seems to be
a smeared
print: blurred lines and grey flecks
blended with the paper;

then, as you scan
it, you see in the left-hand corner
a thing that is like a branch: part of a tree
(balsam or spruce) emerging
and, to the right, halfway up
what ought to be a gentle
slope, a small frame house.

In the background there is a lake,
and beyond that, some low hills.

(The photograph was taken
the day after I drowned.

I am in the lake, in the center
of the picture, just under the surface.

It is difficult to say where
precisely, or to say
how large or small I am:
the effect of water
on light is a distortion

but if you look long enough,
eventually
you will be able to see me.)

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Picture of Me Assignment

Your task with this assignment is to create a written product which uses a picture of yourself as the springboard to teaching us a little about you. It also provides a window to your writing style.

Step 1: Select a photograph of yourself or of something that describes you as an individual. Bring it with you for our next class.

Step 2: Examine the photograph and take some time to really reflect on it. Jot down what you remember about when the photo was taken. Note as many sensory details as possible (sight, smell, sound, touch, taste). Brainstorm different details, thoughts, and feelings looking at the photo brings up.

Step 3: Pick a genre of writing with which you are familiar and comfortable. It could be poetry, a short narrative, original song lyrics, a news story, a script, or a personal essay. Whichever one you pick, just make sure to give it the time and effort to make this assignment worthwhile and not just busywork for you. Push yourself.

Step 4: Write it.

Step 5: Be prepared to SHARE it.