

Stephen's journal

1 Week One

2 *If you wrote the story of your life now, what title would you give the story?*
3 *Reflect on why you would name it in that way.*

4 *How many chapters would you give your story? Name the chapters and*
5 *explain the significance of the chapter headings.*

6 *Where do God and religion fit into your story? Choose the chapter of your*
7 *story in which God and religion seem to play a large part and write about why*
8 *they were major characters in that part of your life.*

9

10 Snakes and Ladders

11 The reason that I would name my story this is because up to now there have
12 been many obstacles in my life. The snake represents that in my life, but
13 there are many helping hands along the way. This can be through my family
14 and friends.

15 Chapter One: Golden Entrance

16 The reason for this is because I was born in Kalgoorlie which is a gold mining
17 town. I was born in Kalgoorlie Hospital. I was born with silver hair and
18 apparently I never made a fuss. Subsequently I was the highlight of the
19 Hospital with regular visits from the nurses. I believe this warm welcome to
20 the world was a good one.

21 Chapter Two:

22 Chapter Three: Fork in the road

23 This chapter is about the divorce of my parents. Although I do not remember
24 this separation much, it has still affected my life. I have a step-mum and a
25 half brother whom I'm very close to. After living in Cocos for two years, we
26 moved back to family and friends in Canalham.

27 Chapter Four: First Day Fear

28 My first day at school was a scary one. I hated school for six weeks until I
29 finally settled in at Canalham Beach Primary School.

30 Chapter Five: New

31 I got a new brother in Year 3. I got a new house the same year and I went to
32 a new school, Denton Primary School.

33 Chapter Six:

34 Chapter Seven: Andrea

35 This is the biggest chapter in my book. It is when my cousin Andrea dove into
36 the water at Yallingup. She broke her neck on the sand-bar and is now a
37 quadriplegic. She has inspired me in many ways, strengthening my faith.

38 Chapter Eight: The HAM

39 This is the final chapter. The HAM means Canalham. All my mates live here
40 and I am content with this area. I have a great circle of friends, and I
41 suppose, now with my licence I know how 'the Ham' works.

42 Week Two

43 *Recall a moment in your life when you were convinced that God exists or*
44 *doesn't exist and that God cares or doesn't care for you.*

45 *Describe the situation.*

46 *Try to recall who or what acted as the catalyst, that is, which prompted you to*
47 *recognise God's presence or absence in the situation in which you found*
48 *yourself.*

49 *Describe how your thinking about god changes because of your encounter*
50 *with this person or event.*

51 The only time I have really changed in faith was the time of my cousin's
52 accident. I have always believed in God, but her dedication has strengthened
53 my religious beliefs.

54 Andrea may have very well have drowned not being able to turn over to
55 breathe as she was face down in the water, but one of her friends was clever
56 enough to swim out and turn her over. Most kids would think that she was
57 kidding, lying face down, but he had a feeling Andrea was not OK.

58 I believe God was looking out for her.

59 This even, in the beginning questioned my faith. I thought that if there was a
60 god, why would he let this happen. After much soul searching I realised that
61 God did not control this, but he did give Andrea the strength to get through
62 this.

63

64 Week Three

65 *Recall a religious education lesson that challenged you to change your ideas*
66 *about your faith. Reflect on how your faith changed because of that lesson.*

67 *Try to recall how the change came about. What did you reflect on? Who*
68 *helped you to re-think your belief?*

69 *How did the change in what you believed affect your attitude towards God and*
70 *your religion?*

71 Religious Education not dramatically changed my religion. There are no real
72 lessons challenging my faith.

73 If I was asked what year challenged my faith, I would have to say that Mr
74 Jones Year 11 class challenged me. There were many heated debates, the
75 two main ones would have been abortion and stem cell research.

76 I realise the arguments of the Catholic Church in both of these topics but in
77 both cases I disagree. This was the first time I had really disagreed with the
78 Church. I had my own values and attitudes towards these topics and the
79 debates along with the Catholic Church's view did not change my opinion.

80 I agree with abortion, the reason being I don't believe a child should be
81 brought into this life if the parents cannot provide a sufficient life for the child.
82 The Church says we should give the child up for adoption, but I believe that is
83 too hard for the parents. A mother should not have to hold the baby for nine
84 months and give the child away.

85 An example of a situation is a rape victim. If a girl is raped and falls pregnant
86 I believe that she should not have to keep the baby. It will only bring back
87 traumatic memories of the ordeal.

88 I agree with stem cell research. I would give anything for the technology to
89 grow stems so that Andrea can walk again. I believe that there are many
90 tragic stories of spinal injuries. It is the same principle as cancer. Most
91 people agree with the treatment of cancer through technology, even though it
92 is prolonging life.

93 Even down to colds and flue. We take medicine to get over it. Why shouldn't
94 people like Andrea be able to get over their spinal injuries?

95 The Catholic Church cannot have the best of both worlds. They should say it
96 is okay for cancer treatment, but not for stem cell research. I know the
97 ramifications of stem cell research and embryos, but my view is the same for
98 abortion.

99

100 Week Four

101 *Consider your future life as you would like it to become. What would be the*
102 *main theme of the next chapter of your book?*

103 *Give the chapter a title and explain its significance.*

104 *How would you like your relationship with God to be in the future? What is*
105 *there in your life at present or your present relationship with God that tells you*
106 *that such a future is possible?*

107 I am going to do two chapters: the distant future and the not-too-distant future.

108 Not-too-distant future: Party Time

109 I cannot wait until my TEE exams are over. It will be a heavy burden lifted off
110 my shoulders. I will be able to relax for a year (I'm taking a year off before I
111 go to Uni, I will get a job and buy a nice car.). I plan to hang out with my
112 mates relaxing and partying on the weekends, spending my work money on
113 whatever I like. After this time I will settle down and go to university where
114 hopefully I will study mechanical engineering.

115 Distant future: First Steps

116 What I want more than anything is for Andrea to walk again. I would like the
117 next big chapter of my life to be that of the rehabilitation of my cousin's legs
118 so that she is able to walk again.

119 At this stage in my life, I would like for myself to work for Holden designing
120 and making cars and car parts.

121 I would like to own my own home which I plan to own by the time I am thirty
122 and one day I can hope to have a wife and a few rugrats of my own.

123 I would like to have a few toys, such as a nice fast car and a boat which I can
124 fish off, wake board on, and big enough to sleep on and make trips to
125 Rottneest and back. So it will have to be a decent size.

126

127 Concluding Remarks

128 *After looking back on what you have written in your journal, are there any final*
129 *reflections about your life and your faith that you would like to offer to draw*
130 *this part of your life to a close?*

131 All of my stories can be elaborated on. I have been busy with the
132 approaching exams, so a lot of my time is going into the preparation of these
133 exams.