6 WORD MEMOIRS

Legend has it that when Ernest Hemingway was challenged to write a six-word novel, he came up with, “For Sale: baby shoes, never worn.” Inspired by Hemingway’s short story, SMITH magazine launched online in 2006. They challenged readers and famous writers alike to submit their own six- word memoirs for a contest. People of all ages sent in short life stories in droves, and the results were poignant, hilarious, devastating and good lessons to all.

Here are some more examples:
“Whatever will be, we’ll see eventually.”
“Human to humane, not just ‘e.’”
“Good Choices. Bad Choices. Life Lessons.”

The point of this exercise is to create an autobiography of you. But in only 6 (to 10) words. Sounds crazy, right? Not if you put those English muscles to work! Precision is the most important aspect of being a good writer. Never use a paragraph to express something when a sentence will do. Powerful, pithy words will do work for you if you allow them.

Think about some important events that have happened in your life. You haven’t lived 15 or 16 years and done absolutely nothing. What do you care about? Who do you care about? Who cares about you and why? What makes you, YOU?

In the bubbles below, you are going to create association maps. Think of three events or things about you and some strong verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc. that will help describe them.

(adapted from http://www.sixwordmemoirs.com/)

Now pick one event (or two if you're really indecisive) and see if you can use the associated words you jotted down to create a 6-10 word story about who you are.

You might want to create a few different ones and play around with them until you find the perfect one that you are satisfied with.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Once you have picked your perfect story, you are going to create a visual representation for the words. You can use fancy lettering, draw pictures, even use mixed media to help visualize your story. I want to know who you are and what important and unique about you!

When you are ready to work on your visual representation and illustrate your memoir, see me and I will give you paper.

This assignment will be due on Thursday and we will have presentations next Monday. (Yes, you will be presenting these. I want to hear the story behind your memoir. This will take more than 10 words to really explain!)

Have fun and get creative!

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