

Six Word Memoir, A Quick Write activity: Janet Ilko
Writing For Change 2010

Objective: The students will describe something about themselves in exactly six words.

This lesson is a great one to do after students have begun to make lists and write about what interests them. I found this website while studying memoir mentor text, and it is a great place for kids to publish as well as read what other's write daily. The group who sponsors the 6 word memoir books and site was interviewed on NPR. If you google 6 word memoirs, you will also find the piece in NPR about this great writing site and a sample powerpoint to share with your kids that have the memoirs along with photos or illustrations.

Materials

pencil

Writer's notebook

Laptop and projector if you want to share the website, otherwise just copy down samples

<http://www.smithmag.net/sixwords>

A memoir is a story about your life, important moments that you want to share with others that tell about what's important to you, what you value, and what you want others to know.

1. Have students generate a list about what is important to them, things that are happening right now in their lives, character traits.
2. Read some sample six word memoirs from the site or from this list
 - Asked to quiet down, spoke louder
 - Wasn't noticed so I painted a train
 - Left cell phone on car roof
 - Working hard on my teacher look
 - Endless summers, walking the beach together
 - I never finish anything, except cake
3. Have students look at their lists and write at least three 6 word memoirs about themselves. (Give about 5-7 minutes)
4. Share the memoirs with a partner or triad, and together each person chooses one that best represents what is going on in their life right now.
5. Do a whip around read in the whole group. Each person shares their 6 word statement one after the other without comments from anyone in the group. It sounds like a really cool poem read out loud.