



WRITER'S CORNER

By Darien Gee

This is how we do it

Quote of the Week: "Writing is an exploration. You start from nothing and learn as you go." E.L. Doctorow

Writing Exercise of the Week: Write about your life, who you are, or what you love in six words (no more, no less).

Waimea Middle School eighth graders, I'm talking to you.

At the heart of every memoir is a memory

That's right, I'm calling you out.

Last month you were writing memoir. I came by, we talked story, words traveled from your mind to the paper. By writing it down, you have left your mark. Those six-word memoirs cannot be erased. I have pictures. There's no undoing it now. You can't pretend you didn't write what you wrote,



ABOVE: Waimea Middle School eighth graders pose with author Darien Gee after her lesson on memoir writing. LEFT: Darien Gee speaks to Waimea Middle School eighth graders about memoir writing. (PHOTO COURTESY OF DARIEN GEE)

because not only did you write it, we all read it. It was up in those windows for the wide world to see. A few favorites:

"Born on Oahu, raised on Hawaii." (Kai Ibana)

"Got hit, life bit, rage quit." (Taran Takahashi)

"I live clean and surf mean." (Kamuella Spencer-Herring)

"All my scars are my stories." (Ryan Hooley)

"Roping wild cattle is a battle." (Levi Higa)

"Determination is fuel for a journey." (Christian Gomez)

"I am who I am today." (Jennifer Kennedy)

"Lost in cyberspace, never to return." (Austin Kahoopii)

Ah, such good times. So now what?

If you think I've forgotten about our short time together, you're wrong. At the heart of every memoir is a memory, and I remember that Wednesday. So much that I will admit to

being, well, impressed.

Oh yes, I did just say that out loud.

Writing is not easy for a lot of people, even for those of us who make a living by it. And if writing wasn't hard enough on its own, there's all that editing and revising. Polishing and shaping your memoir is how a good piece of writing is transformed into a great piece of writing, so when your teacher, Leesa Robertson (who took the initiative to bring me into your classroom, so give her serious props for that), guides you on how to revise your work, listen. To quote Honolulu playwright and author, Victoria Kneubuhl, "Learn to love rewriting, because rewriting is where you can turn lead into gold."

And the writing that came out of those red ticket exercises? Seriously good. It's amazing what you can do

in seven minutes, isn't it? It makes me wonder what kind of writer you'd be if you wrote for seven minutes on your own every day.

I mean, I know you're busy. I saw you guys at recess. And those musubis? Yes, we need to concentrate on eating our musubis. And grilled cheese sandwiches. No time to write—we're eating here! And you athletes—you can love your sports and write about it. Yup. It's been done before, too.

So let's just say that you decide to write seven minutes a day, just for yourself. Nobody has to see it. You won't be graded. You have nothing to lose (other than seven minutes) and you may be surprised where it might lead you. Published teen authors are

HAIL THE WMS WRITERS:

Anthonsen Ading, Roland Afaga, Isaac Aguilar, Kuilei Aikau, Aukai Aipia, Kilipaki Akau, Maitland Akau, Carrie Alaimo, Kaipo Amina-Kalani, Amos Asheel, John Paul Bala, Esther Benanua, Eamon Beneski, Henry Benjamin, Macartney Biegler, Kayla Branco, Teani Branco, Jacob Brown, Izabelle Cabulizan-Abraham, Kelsan Cacoulidis, Orion Chisholm, Easton Chong, Coby DeMello, Lahela Dickens, Sadie Ednie, Antonette Fernandez, Gian Gaces, Rancelyn Gali-Lucero, Maya Gee, Christian Gomez, Kayla Gray, Isaac Guerro-Yonemura, Serena Hanato, Levi Higa, Destin Hokama Roberson, Ryan Hooley, Zaya Hooper, Baylie Horn, Dennis Huddy Moody, Jonah Hurney, Kai Ibana, Kea Ibana, Madilyn Jardine, Austin Kahoopii, Cianni Kekahuna, Jennifer Kennedy, Jayden Kuoha Busque, Maluhia Lewi, Taylor Lewi, Harleigh Lindsey, Chloe Lindsey-Leong, Kieran Lo, Johnna Marsh, Kaeo Medeiros Kaaekuahiwi, Flavio Miche Rosales, Taylor Miyada, Lehua Muranaka Walton, Tyler Pagdilao, Laakea Peleholani, Samantha Peters, Keenan Pierson, Keaweii Pilayo, Hollie Reyes, Asher Robertson, Emma Saito, Helen Soares, Jeren Soriano, Celeste Souza, Dylan Spencer, McKella Spencer, Kamuella Spencer Herring, Cody Summers, Christian Tablit, Mikayla Tablit, Taran Takahashi, Namen Tibnol, Trayson Tripp Carvalho, Trace Tupe, Ariana Velasco, Kuni Wabool, Rayna Willis, Jason Yadao.



Waimea Middle School eighth graders post their six-word memoirs. (PHOTO COURTESY OF DARIEN GEE)

popping up everywhere these days—just think Christopher Paolini, Kat Zhang, Kody Keplinger, Hannah Moskowitz, Stefan Bachmann—so why not in Waimea?

Let me know if you decide to take up this challenge. I won't embarrass you with a high-five in the parking lot. Snaps,

maybe, but no high-fives. I promise.

Anyone can write a six-word memoir. To learn more, visit sixwordmemoirs.com. Darien Gee is a national bestselling author based in Waimea. She also writes under the name Mia King. Visit her at dariengee.com and miaking.com.