Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Say it in six words:**

**Six-word memoir unit**

Get ready to create your own six-word memoir.

The first question on your mind is probably, “What is a memoir?”

A memoir is an account of one's life and experiences. Rather than telling the story of someone’s whole life, a memoir focuses on one small life experience.

A memoir can be any length. It should be honest and reflect a person’s individual voice.

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In 2008, a book entitled *Not Quite What I Was Planning: Six Word Memoirs by Writers Famous & Obscure* (edited by Smith Magazine) was published. The book is a collection of hundreds of 6-word memoirs that were submitted to the book’s publisher. This book demonstrates that everyone has a story to tell. It also shows that it doesn’t take a lot of words to communicate emotion and ideas.

**Examples of Six-Word Memoirs**

Awkward girl takes chances. Fun ensues.

-- Charlotte Riley

I auditioned. I got the part.

-- Faith Hoffman

Never lived up to my potential.

--Leslie Sterling

Carbohydrates call my name every day.

--Mary Petersdorf

Anything possible—but I was tired.

--Cheryl Family

I am awfully bored at work.

-- Chris Ponchak

Learned reading, writing, forgot arithmetic.

--Elizabeth Rose Gruner

A sundress will solve life’s woes.

--Kristen Grimm

Time heals all wounds? Not quite.

--Jonathan Miles

Bad brakes discovered at high speed.

-Paul Schultz

Danced in Fields of Infinite Possibilities.

# --Deepak Chopra

I am trying, in every regard.

--Lionel Shriver

I threw away my teddy bear.

--Margot Loren

All night phone calls complete me.

--Harry Manning

Tragic childhood can lead to wisdom.

--Kristin Ahlemieir-Olfe

On her birthday, my life began.

--Lisa Parrack

Afraid of becoming like my mother.

--Gail Reilly

*One tooth. One cavity. Life’s cruel.*

*--John Bettencourt*

Couldn’t cope so I wrote songs.

--Aimee Mann

“ “Well, I thought it was funny!” – Stephen Colbert “I’ve made all the best mistakes.”

“ “My diary is read by everyone.” – Taylor Swift “I refused to be a victim.”

“ “Write. Mother. Sleep. Repeat as needed.” Shonda Rhimes “Former Doc now wears art smock.”

“ “Seeking the fullest expression of self.” Oprah “Painful nerd kid; happy nerd adult.”

“ “Cursed with cancer, blessed with friends.” – 9 year old girl “I fulfilled my awkwardness quota today.”

“ “Mindy Kaling wore sequins to everything.” Mindy Kaling “Recipe for failure. Changed my ingredients.”

# **Six-Word Memoir: Analysis Questions**

Now that you read some six-word memoirs, complete this worksheet.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Select two of the six-word memoirs we reviewed as a class. Copy them down in the boxes below. | |
| Memoir #1 Memoir #2 | |
| Use the space below to answer the following questions:   * What do you think is the meaning/message behind this short memoir? * What do you think prompted the writer to create this memoir? | |
| Memoir #1: | Memoir #2: |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## **Guidelines for Writing your own Six-Word Memoir**

You will be writing between **ten and fifteen** six-word memoirs.

Each memoir must:

* Contain exactly **6 words**.
* Have correct **spelling** and be school **appropriate**.

**Additionally**, complete the **brainstorming sketch sheet** for the memoir you will create. This sheet does not need to be anywhere near perfect or complete. It is just meant to get you thinking about how you might illustrate some of your six-word memoirs.

Your writing should:

* **BE CONCISE.** Concise writing expresses a lot in a few words. If you write concisely, you use few words to clearly convey your idea.
* **CONVEY TONE.** The reader should know your attitude toward the subject.Your writing style can be informal or contain slang. The goal of this assignment is to help your reader get to know you!

Your writing may:

* utilize literary terms
* describe your personality/values
* describe your hobbies
* refer to an experience or action
* include strong verbs, adjectives, or specific nouns

Your final product will be created on a Power Point slide.

Use the space below to brainstorm ideas for your six-word memoirs.

**Ideas For My Six-Word Memoir**

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Part I. Write down ten to fifteen six-word memoirs on this side of the page.**

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## \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Part II. On this brainstorming sketch sheet, sketch out three six-word memoirs you may want to illustrate for your final project.**

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