

## Pernille Ripp

- Teacher. Author. Creator. Speaker. Mom. -

**BUILDING COMMUNITY, NEW YEAR, WRITING, WRITING IDENTITY**

# Illustrated 6-Word Memoirs

We continue to work on developing our writing communities, slowly settling into what it means to write together, to be writers, and to feel free to write. We have written directions, we have discussed the rules of writing, we have read great writing, and we have set up our writing circles. All this work is centered in identity. All this work is centered in learning who each other are and developing a feeling of safety and community as we grow into this year together.

Now we inch closer to writing personal essays on topics centered on our own lives and so we used the 6-word memoirs. This ingenious little foray into writing has a long history. A great place to read more about them can be found here. (<https://www.sixwordmemoirs.com/>) They are exactly what they sound like; 6 word stories about our lives.

I introduced them by showing them examples of other 6-word memoirs, some serious, some not so much. I showed my own example...

Then we discussed the perimeters of the challenge: Exactly 6 words, it cannot be a list of adjectives, should reveal some part of your life that you feel comfortable with.

Then the kids brainstormed for a bit in their writers' notebooks, playing around with sentences, words, and punctuation.

When they felt satisfied with their chosen words, they had someone spell check their final sentence. A few spelling errors were missed, which happens.

One side was for them to illustrate either as a collage or as an abstract image of their words. The other side was for their words. I told the kids that they would be displayed so to put their names on the back for privacy unless they wanted it to be known that they made it.

We listened to music. Kids played with words, drew, and then handed them in. I couldn't believe the care many took. While certainly there were many that spoke of sports, dogs, and other seemingly small-ish parts of their lives, every single one spoke of something they found important or showed a sliver of their personality.

A small lesson that showed so much about their identity once again. See for yourself, how they turned out.

Directions: Write your chosen 6-word memoir on one side of the face. On the other side of the face, draw a representation of you. It can be abstract, your likeness, things you feel tell your story.







