

# Six-Word Memoir Step-by-Step

1. List as many words and phrases as you can about yourself. Use nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs -- anything, just write down whatever represents what you like, what you do, how you do it, how you describe yourself, how others describe you. . . ) **3 minutes**
2. Circle two to three words or phrases from this list that stand out and could express a story or something representative of who you are/what you have done. **1 minute**
3. Pick one of those two to three things and Freewrite on that topic. Write whatever comes to mind. It's a Freewrite, so just write. **3 minutes**
4. Box in words and phrases within this Freewrite that synthesize (tie together and express a new thought) an idea that represents you. **1 minute**
5. Using strong action verbs, expressive adjectives and adverbs, specific nouns, and purposeful punctuation, write this idea that represents *you*, using only six deliberately chosen words.
6. Edit and revise until your Six-Word Memoir tells a story about you that provides your audience with insights into who and what you're all about.

**-Because you're telling a story that represents who you are in only six words, the specific words you choose and how you arrange them will take time to get right.**

**Expect to spend some time on steps 5 and 6. Be sure to write your way through this process. Don't just stare at a blank sheet of paper.**

## Revision Guide:

- **Does your memoir tell or suggest a story that is special to you?**
- **Does that story reveal an idea or insight that is unique and important to you?**
  - Not just what you've done, but how or why you did it and/or why it matters to you.
- **Does your memoir use a specific structure that helps to better express this idea or insight?**
  - Single phrase or clause
  - Patterns of words or phrases: pairs of words, list, half and half, repetition. . .
  - Relationships: cause/effect, question/answer, contrasting elements, main heading w/subtext
- **Does your memoir use writing conventions and literary elements?**
  - Punctuation: colon, comma, exclamation point, period, question mark, parenthesis, brackets . . .
  - Do you use figurative language? (metaphor, simile, hyperbole, personification)
  - Do you play with sound devices? (alliteration, consonance, rhyme, onomatopoeia,)
  - Are there powerful verbs? Expressive adjectives or adverbs? Specific nouns?