Post-Unit Summative Assessment Task

Students will use memoir-writing techniques to publish one full memoir. The memoir will be based on a significant event in which the student gained a new understanding about himself or herself; other people; or the broader world. The conclusion of the memoir will reflect on the meaning of the event. Student memoir writers will celebrate and share this new understanding.

2008

“Emma” My mum says as she sits me down. “We have to talk about Brendan.”

“He’s going to get better right?” I ask unaware of the course of the conversation.

“That’s just it baby, he’s not.” Mummy explains

“Why mummy, is he going to be sick like this forever?” [This conversation isn’t going in a direction I favor.]

“No baby, he will die at some point.” Mummy says sadly. It feels like the bed is sucking me down.

“You’re wrong!” I yell. Guess what. She wasn’t.

February 20th 2009

“Hi mummy!” I say when I see my mum. My class and I are just walking out of the 100th day of school assembly when I see her. “Emma lets go get your stuff.” Mum says

“Why mummy, am I leaving early?” I ask

“Yes baby, we are.” My mum replies

“Why?” This is when she pauses. She turns toward me with a sad look on her face.

“Oh baby, Brendan died this morning.” It feels like I was punched in the stomach.

“Oh.” I mumble. On the walk back from my locker I almost don’t even notice when I slip on some wet paint. I fall over and start to cry. Everything hurts, I feel like something’s missing.

Jianna Taylor 6/17/15 5:32 PM
Comment [1]: This writer has a knack for taking her dialogue tags well beyond the traditional “said” to really convey to the reader the unstated things she is feeling.

Jianna Taylor 6/17/15 5:35 PM
Comment [2]: The writer chose to begin with dialogue to imitate mentor texts read in class as a way to pull the reader into the action of the memoir. This writer also chose to organize her writing as a series of flashbacks to bring the reader to the current situation and to show how her thinking has changed over time. She has formatted the dialogue mostly correctly, though punctuation needs to be addressed.
feel like the world hates me. Suddenly all the Rusty lockers and stained carpet are glaring at me. My mouth is dry and it hurts my throat.

“Brendan!” I cry. Why is this happening to me?

The Present day.

“Hey baby, what are you thinking about?” Mum asks as we climb into the car.

“Brendan.” I say.

“What about Brendan?” She asks.

“I don’t know, I don’t think about him to much any more. I guess the fact that it will be six years this February.” I say a little more to myself. “But I don’t really hurt anymore.” This is when I pause. “I know it will always hurt a little bit but I’ll live, I have lived.”

“Good for you baby” Mum says.

“Thanks mum.” I say. But it is true, I think to myself. He died, I was stuck, but I kept going. It’s true. I DID live.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Memorable Moment</strong></td>
<td>Clear memorable moment</td>
<td>Memorable moment is somewhat clear</td>
<td>Memorable moment is unclear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Understanding or Realization</strong></td>
<td>The writer has made clear what he or she has learned or realized from this memorable moment.</td>
<td>The writer has made it somewhat clear what he or she has learned or realized from this memorable moment.</td>
<td>Meaning or learning is unclear from the experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure/Organization of Memoir</strong></td>
<td>Writer shows attitudes and feelings through events BEFORE the moment, during the meaningful moment, and AFTER the moment.</td>
<td>Writer somewhat shows attitudes and feelings through events BEFORE the moment, during the meaningful moment, and AFTER the moment.</td>
<td>Writer is not able to show attitudes and feelings through events BEFORE the moment, during the meaningful moment, and AFTER the moment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style/Voice</strong></td>
<td>Meaning is shown through several literary devices weaved into text, including similes, metaphors, personification and onomatopoeia.</td>
<td>Meaning is shown through few literary devices weaved into text, including similes, metaphors, personification and onomatopoeia.</td>
<td>Limited use of literary devices. Weak contribution to meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates solid grasp of standard writing conventions and uses them effectively.</td>
<td>Writer shows reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions.</td>
<td>Errors distract the reader and make the text difficult to read.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teacher Comment:
This piece of writing was a culmination of the Launching the Writer’s Notebook/Memoir unit and took students through the process of setting up their notebooks, generating potential story ideas, revising, and bringing their writing to a final draft. Many 7th grader writers struggle with showing how their thinking changed as a result of the moment about which they are writing. This writer was no different and went through many revisions prior to landing on how to best show how she changed without making it seem stilted or inauthentic. She has occasional grammatical errors, which show that this writer could benefit from support in the editing stage to clean up her writing. This is an example of a high level 7th grade memoir.