

National Day of Writing

By: Kimberly Erskine.

Today is National Day of Writing. Such an important day that often times goes overlooked. Last year I submitted a few poems to the National Gallery of Writing. Nothing too fancy, just a small way of celebrating. This year I decided to do something much bigger. This year I decided to participate in Rowan University's writing marathon. I originally intended to participate for 3 hours from 3-6 pm, but then I got done class early, so I was able to come at 2 and not 3 for an extra hour of writing glory. This piece of writing ~~is~~ essay? story? prose? I'm not quite sure what to call it yet... is the first piece of writing that I will do.

I am so excited to be participating in this event. ~~I~~ I have always had a strong love for writing. When I was in elementary school my teachers used to write questions on the board that we would have to answer in journals. Most kids just wrote a few sentences or at the most, a paragraph. I would write 5 pages or more. The kids always hated it when I volunteered to share my response. ~~I~~

I always enjoyed those exercises, ~~but~~
but I never really realized how much
I loved writing or how good I
was at writing until I was in
6th grade. I had a ~~teacher~~ Communism
teacher named Mrs. Jay. I initially
wasn't too fond of her. I thought
she was a little on the strict
side and she one gave my sister
a detention, so I thought that she
was mean. However, Mrs. Jay did
something that no one else could
do — she taught me to love poetry.
It was April and Spring had
just arrived. Mrs. Jay was so
excited because April was National
Poetry Month. While this news
thrilled Mrs. Jay, the rest of the
class, including myself, hated it. We
thought poetry was nothing more than
a string of rhymes and a bunch
of stuff that didn't make sense.
It took a tragedy for me to
make sense of poetry...
Mrs. Jay made us write every
form of poetry there was. At first
I hated it. I felt like there
were too many rules and guidelines
I wrote about ~~me~~ things
that seemed rather meaningless like:

frogs or how ~~so~~ cold it was in the winter. Then I got an assignment to write a more emotional, descriptive poem, and it didn't even have to rhyme. I didn't have any ideas at first, but then news broke that a close family friend of mine, Mrs. Helen Vale, lost her long-standing battle against cancer. Suddenly, emotions poured out from me, I remembered how kind she was and how she was always there for me, especially as a young child when my father was deathly ill. I remembered watching her play piano in Church each week. No one could do it better. I was upset to see her gone, but I knew she was in a better place.

Suddenly I knew exactly what to write. I wrote a poem called "Goodbye to You" that was a tribute to Mrs. Vale and everything she was. It all came so naturally to me and the final product was beautiful.

Mrs. Fay loved it. She thought I could get it published and she told me about some writing contests that I could enter. I entered and surprise, surprise, I became a published poet!

After getting my poetry published →

I fell in love with poetry and
James. Confidence in my writing
abilities. I wrote several more poems
and published a handful of
them. Writing felt therapeutic.
Whenever anything went wrong
I would turn to writing. It
allowed me to let out all of my
emotions and helped me to gain
a better understanding of different
situations. It always made me
feel better.

I didn't limit my writing
to just poetry either. I also
fell in love with journalism. I
wrote for the school newspaper
every chance I got and became
editor and chief my senior
year of high school. I won
awards for my journalism and
even got to work with The
Philadelphia Enquirer and
around Philly Com. These organizations
also encouraged me to start my
own blog. My blog, What's Poppin'
d'n Pop Culture! has been live
for about 205 years now and
gets about 25 visitors a week from
as many as 5 different
countries.

I also began to write fiction. I wrote my first book, "So I, Me Hearing" after my sister told me I was a stupid poet who wrote a book or anything. My book the result of strong determination to her wrong. I had since written to children's books, "11:11 Wishes" and "Library Thief", a short story "Abe Media", and I am currently in the process of writing my second "Zodiac". Meanwhile, I am trying to publish everything that I have written. When I am not writing, I am studying about writing. In May I obtained my Associate's degree in English. Currently I am attending Rowan University where I am double majoring in English and Writing Arts with concentration in Creative Writing. I originally majoring in Journalism, I thought the classes involve too much history and politics so I changed it to Writing Arts. I am also a senator of and a writer for the Rowan University's humor magazine and a writer/editor for a student campus literary magazine. My studies have already helped me immensely. One of the class

that I have this semester is
Magazine Article Writing. This class
has essentially turned me into a
freelance writer. My topic is
Teen suicide and it has been
going for better than expected. I
have just submitted my query
letter to Spotlight on Recovery
Magazine and I should hear
from them soon.

As you can see, writing has
played a very important role
in who I am. Writing is not
just a hobby or a job for me,
it's an identity. I can not
imagine who I'd be without it.
It helps me to communicate and
express myself in ways I never
could before. Happy National Day
of Writing. Now go on, pick
up a pen. And write!