May 15, 2011

Writing Showcase

Everett N K Ofori
What Separates Master Writers from So-so Writers

There you are, the blank screen of the computer glaring back at you. One moment, your mind is teeming with ideas. Another moment, you have no clue what to put down. You think to yourself, “If only I were a great writer, the words would be flowing smoothly and all I’d have to do is put them down and go back to doing other things.”

In such moments, you are apt to think that master writers are great because they do not have such moments of frustration.

Master writers, as it turns out, know full well the experience of words that will not come and words that come in a muddled torrent, with little rhyme or reason.

Master writers also know, that the early moments of confusion, or lack of clarity, do not mean that they are bad writers, just that they should work harder to make their meaning clear.

And so, while the so-so writer slinks back into bed, bemoaning his or her lack of ability, the master writer gets to work in earnest, cutting here and slashing there, trying out a fresh new line or argument here, adding a touch of whimsy to a character there, all the while enduring the pain of sitting down for long stretches of time, hoping that the work that now seems so bland, so uninspired and uninspiring, can be salvaged, perhaps even polished to an uncommon shimmer.

Master writer Ernest Hemingway rewrote the ending to his novel, *Farewell to Arms*, thirty-nine times, because, in his own words, he wanted to get the words right.

For another example, Pulitzer prize winning writer of over 40 books, James Michener, once remarked, “I’m not a very good writer, but I’m an excellent rewriter.”

Thus, no matter how insipid your initial efforts might be or seem, if you are willing to get down to the serious business of snipping, scrapping, and sometimes, starting all over again, who knows?

One day, months or years from now, you will be giving this same piece of advice to another frustrated fresh face to the world of writing: Rewriting is the key to crafting messages that go straight to your reader’s heart.

Now, there’s no need to pressure yourself: just sit down, and start writing...so you can rewrite later on.
This morning, I woke up with a new pang of excitement. It’s my big day – the day of my dream wedding with William. No, it should be Prince William. In four hours’ time I would be pr...Princess Catherine!

My beauty assistant was waiting for me outside. She set my hair and gently curled my brunette hair; then I slid into my wedding dress. I was really stunning in that wedding dress, if I may say so myself. The silk material was so smooth. The laces were designed with such detail that every curl and whirl could be clearly seen. It was just a beaut!

Then, my dad accompanied me into the royal car. On the way, people cheered me on. They were extremely friendly. I could see them waving their hats at me, shouting and calling at me, peeping through the crowds just to get a glimpse of me. I felt like a famous celebrity! I waved to them and put on a warm smile. How wonderful it was! This is every girl's dream... to marry her Prince Charming...

We stopped at Westminster Abbey and we walked in. Unfortunately, part of my dress got stuck to something in the middle of the car. Utterly embarrassed, I tried with all my might to tug at it. Of course it came out easily and people didn’t see it. Phew!

We made our pledges and William put the ring on my finger. It got stuck in the middle of my finger and I could feel William fiercely pushing the ring up my finger; he secretly winked at me! How sweet...eh?

We listened to the choirs and ate buffet. The food was delicious but of course, I did my best not to eat ravenously. Or else, I would be called the Ravenous Princess of Britain. Certainly...that...would not amuse the queen!

This whole day has been quite an excitement for me. Me, Catherine -- a part of the royal family. From now on, I will be addressed as Duchess of Cambridge. I love it! Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge.

I, Catherine Middleton, am the Duchess of Cambridge! Hooray!

Love,
Kate
Of the Summer Season
I like summer the best of all the seasons because I love the sea, watermelons, and the warmth of the summer sun.

Of Climate
I was born in July, and many people say, “People born in summer are strong against heat.” I really feel better in summer. On the other hand, people born in winter are weak against heat. For example, my wife often says as soon as it gets hot, “It is too hot today; turn on the air conditioner or give me something cold to drink please.” She was born in January!

Of Watermelons
Watermelon is one of my favorite fruits. According to my mother, before getting pregnant with me, she did not like watermelon very much. However, after getting pregnant, she suddenly felt like eating watermelon. She did not know why she wanted to eat watermelon; a few months later, I was born.

Of course, I loved watermelon right from the beginning and have continued to do so. I think that this phenomenon is very interesting. Did my soul like watermelon before I was born or did I become fond of watermelon after my mother started eating it? I wonder.

Of the Sea
I like swimming in the sea very much, so I go to the beach every summer. However, will I be able to go to the beach this year? I wonder about this because of possible radiation in the sea. I do not believe the information coming from the government now. I wonder: How dangerous is the sea? How much polluted water has entered the sea? Are living things in the sea all right? Can I eat fish caught in the sea? What can I do now?

Of Kobe City Summers & Anaji Island
I used to live in Kobe City when I was a child. Each summer, I went to Anaji Island by ferryboat. The sea near to Anaji is very calm; the sea temperature is very comfortable; the beach scenery is beautiful, with a pine grove and clean sand. I have loved Anaji Island since those days.

If you have a lot of time on your hands and want to relax, I recommend that you go to Anaji Island. In the future, I would like to go to Anaji Island with my wife and relax at a bed and breakfast. At Anaji island, bed-and-breakfast inns are inexpensive, and yet they have a very good atmosphere, serve delicious food, and have sociable owners. Maybe, you can feel at home.

Of Kanto Area Beaches
At present, I live in Tsukuba City, so I go to Kanto area beaches every summer. In Kanto, the sea temperature is very low, so I cannot swim for a long time. Have I become an old man? Many children play for a long time in the sea! I cannot believe it!

Of the Quest for the Truth
So, in conclusion, maybe before I was born, I liked summer. Do you believe there is another world somewhere? If there is another world, does it mean people are born and die many times? I do not know, but recently, I have sometimes wondered where people go when they die. I am looking forward to the day when I can find the truth.
It is possible to overcome barriers to minority success in Canada. The stance of this book is that new immigrants, refugees and international students do not have to settle for underachievement despite the cultural and structural disadvantages they face in Canada. The fact is, the unequal social structure of Canada has some cracks, and many minorities have used strategic resources to open up these cracks and achieved tremendous upward social mobility in Canadian society from the margins. These documented minority successes in Canada in the face of systemic marginalization provide lessons and hope for new immigrants, refugees and international students.

The economic, political, social and cultural problems that minorities encounter in Canadian institutions, organizations, communities and from individuals overwhelm and break many of them. However, some minorities break records in the face of the frustrations they encounter. What accounts for the success of the latter group of immigrants, refugees and international students in Canada? Individual efforts and personal ambitions are not enough to explain these success stories. This book highlights strategies and support systems that facilitate minority strategic connections with Canadian mainstream institutions, organizations and individuals to win from the margins of society.

Although the book does not get into the theories of inequality, equity and diversity, it does acknowledge the structural and cultural barriers to minority success in Canada. That is, it does not blame individual minorities for not making it in Canada. Rather, it points to strategic resources that new immigrants, refugees and international students can use to help them overcome some of the barriers to success in Canada.

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About the Authors

Dr. Adu-Febiri is currently Sociology Professor in the Department of Social Sciences at Camosun College, British Columbia, Canada. Francis is also an Associate Member of the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University of Victoria. He is the author of First Nations Students Talk Back: Voices of a Learning People. Dr. Adu-Febiri is the founder and president of Workplace Diversity Consulting Services (WDGS), and serves as the Chair of the Ethnocultural Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Children and Family Development, Victoria, British Columbia. He has been the president of the Canadian Chapter of the International Institute for Human Factor Development (IIHFD) since 2000.

Everett Ofori is the author of Prepare for Greatness: How to Make Your Success Inevitable and The Changing Japanese Woman: From Yamatonadeshiko to Yamatonadegucci.
Writing Showcase

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Visiting Nijyo Castle in Kyoto

Two weeks ago, I went to Kyoto with my mom and husband to see my husband’s parents. We had lunch in a traditional restaurant where there was a nice garden, leading up to Nijyo Castle.

Nijyo Castle is so famous because it is located in the center of Kyoto, and was built by the Tokugawa Shogunate. In that part of Kyoto, we can see the beauty of traditional buildings, along with the art and sculpture of the 17th century. Also Nijyo Castle is the place where the Taisei Hokan took place.

In 1868, the last Edo Tokugawa Shogun returned political power to the emperor and the emperor began to rule once again. This historical event was held in Nijyo Castle.

I was so surprised when I learned this historical fact while in my school days. Also, I visited Nijyo Castle two times when I was a student. But I had forgotten that Nijyo Castle was such a great historical stage during the rule of the Tokugawa Shogunate.

It had been over 25 years since I last visited Nijyo Castle. Probably I did not have any recollections about Nijyo Castle. But when I visited Nijyo Castle this time, I was so impressed.

First of all, I saw the room where Taisei Hokan was held in 1868 again. The room was so wide, clean and quiet; I imagined being there in the Edo-period. I also imagined how the Shogun must have felt having to return political power to the emperor in this room. Taisei Hokan was a very big event in the Edo-period.

When I was a student, I studied Japanese history. But unfortunately I was not interested in it. As noted earlier, I had visited Kyoto two times on school trips, but I only remembered the delicious taste of green tea ice cream! Even though I am Japanese, I guess I was not sure I would ever have much interest in Japanese history.

The visit to Nijyo Castle gave me an opportunity to recapture what little interest I might have had in Japanese history. Actually there were many students with a tourist guide there. The tourist guide explained to them many facts about Nijyo Castle. I listened to his explanation along with the young students. It was such an interesting story. I felt like being on a school trip right there and then!!

Also I would like to understand Japanese history more. Since becoming an adult, I have realized the importance of Japanese history, my own history! I would like to visit Kyoto again and slowly reconnect with various aspects of Japanese history.
Read Assure: Guaranteed Formula for Reading Success with Phonics
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Read Assure takes advantage of the best asset all children have in abundance: tremendous brain power hungry for challenges. Children as young as four have successfully mastered reading English through phonics using Read Assure. The ability to read raises children’s confidence and leads to a love of reading and the desire to devour ever more challenging material.

Parents have recognized that starting their children on the road to mastering English gives young learners the necessary tools to become active and engaged players in an increasingly competitive world. Read Assure provides an entry point by which young learners can pick up any English book - from picture books to more challenging works - and read them with delight.

Having tried and tested this volume on numerous children with great success, the author can say without hesitation that this may be just what your child needs to develop a lifelong love of and proficiency in the English language.

About the Author

Everett Ofori, MBA, is a Canadian instructor with more than 20 years of experience as a teacher of English as a Second Language. Currently residing in Japan, Everett has had the privilege of teaching the whole spectrum of learners, from children as young as four to seasoned business executives. The writing of Read Assure arose out of the simple observation that many of the methods by which children are taught to speak English miss the point, especially when these children do not have the benefit of regular daily interaction with native speakers. The results obtained from the use of this book have been nothing short of spectacular and it is hoped that parents and teachers who are determined to bequeath the gift of English mastery to young learners will find in this book just what they need.

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WHO NEEDS THIS BOOK?

1) Students preparing for their high school final examinations
2) Students preparing to attend college or university where they will have to write term papers, theses, and other reports
3) English as a Foreign/Second Language (EFL/ESL) learners
4) Students planning to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), Law School Admissions Test (LSAT), Test of Written English (TWE), etc.
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6) Administrative assistants, public relations agents, sales people, aspiring authors, etc.

Available from:
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everettofori@gmail.com
This newsletter offers an opportunity for English learners around the world to share their thoughts and experiences and get some writing practice in the process. In many areas of life, most people would readily agree that quality is more important than quantity. This is no less true when it comes to writing. To get to the point where you can produce quality writing on a consistent basis, however, you may have to get into the habit of writing regularly knowing that much of what you produce might win no prizes for excellence. As you keep on writing and thinking, however, who knows what hidden gems might emerge?

The newsletter is published on a bimonthly basis. If you are interested in contributing to it, please contact the editor, Everett Ofori.

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経験豊かなカナダ人の英語教師が、オンラインにて、16のレッスンからなるライティングコースを指導します。

あなたのライティング力が、すぐに飛躍的に向上します！