**Creative Writing Unit Final:**

**Major Characterization**

We’ve spent the last month working under a basic thesis: choose your words wisely. You may have every word in the English language one mouse click away but unless you choose the right ones you’ll never learn how to express yourself in a way that others find compelling or you find satisfying. We’ve dedicated our time to techniques and activities that force you to be more selective and varied in your writing. This assignment marks the culmination of your literary kung-fu training.

**Task**

Your job is to write the opening to a story, putting emphasis on bringing a fully formed character into life in a relatively short period of time. You can create a character from thin air or, if you like, use somebody real. This can be somebody you know well, such as a friend or family member, or somebody you’ve admired from afar, like a celebrity or particularly inspiring teacher. Your piece should be approximately 600 words in length (that’s not as long as it sounds) but feel free to write more if you like.

Your work will be evaluated using the following criteria:

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| 1. **A mix of characterization techniques**

While a singular technique is certainly useful at times (see Dickens or Hammett), I’d like to see you experiment with a few different types. While you can certainly lean more heavily on one over the others, I’d like to see a mix of physical, action/bahaviour, inner thought, speech and reaction descriptions. 1. **Personality and sensory vocabulary**

I want to know your character both inside and out. The best way to do this is to draw on the words from the two handouts I gave you – personality adjectives and the five senses. Also, remember that the words alone do very little. You have to tie them to specific details to give experience their full impact. Also, do not shy away from metaphor and simile. 1. **Story Function**

Although I’m only asking you to start a story, it can still help you in the task of revealing character. How can you set the scene in an interesting way? What do you do to create conflict/tension? 1. **Quality and care**

This goes beyond simply spelling and punctuation correction – although those are both important. It means formatting for clarity, using shorter paragraphs for uniformity of purpose and simply giving your story a title. We have not really covered this yet but I will as we enter the writing process.  |

**Process**

1. Writing Days – **Thursday, Feb 18 and Monday, Feb. 22**
2. Draft Day/Peer Editing – **Wednesday, Feb. 24**

You will bring **2 copies** of your story to piece to class. *Not 1 copy. Not 0 copies and story about your printer.*

1. Final Copy – **Wednesday, March 3th**

You will bring your final copy to class. We will read them to each other and have treats.

Specifics

Length: 600 words

First Draft: Typed or by hand

Final Draft: Typed