**Short, Short Story - A Moment in Time**

- Max. 500 words
- Must follow the plot profile of a story
- Typed and double spaced
- Must be peer edited by three people

**Pointers for writing short, short stories:**

1. Start in the "middle"- you don't have time in this short form to set scenes and build character
2. Don't use too many characters- you don't have time to go into great detail. You may not even need a name!
3. Sweat your title
4. Make your first and last line ring like a bell.
5. Write long, then go short- don't worry too much about word count until you have a draft. Then chip away at all those extra words and sentences. Say it as concisely as you can.
6. Show don't tell! Let the actions speak for themselves.

**A. Focus on a key story element:**

1. Plot- if this is the focus, balance description with narration. *(The Sniper, Journey by Night, Word Problem)*
2. Conflict- the writer needs to consider who or what is in conflict. What causes the conflict and how is it resolved *(The Friday Everything Changed, The Sniper, The Veldt)*
3. Character- protagonist must make a decision, grow in insight be changed by a crisis. A goal or motivation may be thwarted. *(The Sniper, Sea Devil, Bread)*
4. Setting and atmosphere- consider the mood being created. Description, images and symbols establish most of the impact. *(The Veldt, Sea Devil, Lettuce)*
5. Point of view- from whose perspective is the story being told? What advantage does the writer gain from making that choice?

**Which one do you think you would like to have as your focus?**
Possible Ideas to Write About:

- A difficult decision or choice
- A life change caused by an event
- A crisis, challenge
- Learning from experience
- An influential person, setting or moment
- A social problem
- A gorgeous moment in your life
- A misunderstanding
- Experiencing manipulation or control
- Conformity and rebellion
- A destructive obsession
- Encountering the strange and bizarre
- Humans in relation to animals and nature
- Children and childhood- losing innocence

B. Do ONE of the story maps- see website for ideas
C. Have me check your outline before you begin writing.
D. Sentence openers-

- Set the scene
  - “A little before noon she lit the lamp.”
- Introduce a character
  - “Miss Hancock was plump and unmarried and overenthusiastic.”
- Start with an unusual event
  - George had single-handedly landed a whale.”
- Start with a trivial, ordinary event
  - “Under the palm of her hand, the child became aware of a scab under her kneecap.”
- Begin with a character talking
  - “George, I wish you would look at the nursery.”
- Ask a question
  - Did you strike your brother?
- Create suspense
  - The man came out of the house and stood quite still, listening.”
- Grab the reader immediately with a conflict
  - “Peggy had only a little time to make up her mind.”
• Begin the story in medias res (in the middle of the event)
  o “They were walking towards the car when Dorothy noticed him.”

What your story will be assessed on:

• Does your story show conflict and a climax- a basic outline of rising action finishing in a climax?
• Show, not tell. Let the actions speak for themselves.
• Does it make sense? (eg. No aliens and bugs getting married)
• Does your story show voice? (you have learned how to add sensory words- use this skill)
• Specific skills we have learned such as
  o Capitalization
  o Commonly confused words