

## Jeff Solomon: On Writing

Technically speaking I do write, but I wouldn't normally consider myself a writer. I don't often write on my own, and I when I do it is only for myself. Without school I would definitely not be a writer. Almost all of my writing is for the sole purpose of a grade. I don't hate writing, and I even occasionally enjoy it, it's just not something that I would normally do without some external motivation.

School is probably where I do my best writing. When I'm writing for someone else or, admittedly, a grade I tend to put more effort into doing it well. When I write for myself I only do one draft and call it good. If I'm the only one reading it then I don't bother trying to make it understandable for others. When I write it for school I know that other people are going to read it so I put more effort into making it at least mildly interesting and hopefully comprehensible.

The thing I most dread about writing is attempting to put my thoughts into words. In my head they make sense, but as soon as I try to record them it starts to get skewed. Many of my thoughts are made up of pictures. It is difficult to accurately or effectively transcribe them into words. I am constantly questioning whether what I wrote is what I am actually intending to say.

I've never had a writing experience that was awful enough to stick out, although there are times when it is less than fun. For instance, when I work really hard on something, putting lots of time and effort into doing it right, and the end product is crap. This happens to me a lot when writing nonfiction stories. There is nothing more frustrating than actually trying to write a good paper and failing miserably. Any paper I write will, for the most part, be mechanically correct, but the content just isn't always terribly interesting.

I wouldn't say I've ever had a best writing experience, but I have had a few that I am proud of. In Freshman English I remember writing a paper that was about six pages long. It was, and still is, the longest single paper I have ever written. There was another time in Sophomore English where we had to write a descriptive essay. It was a pretty normal assignment, but I just felt really good about how I did on it.

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My biggest influence is my brother, Mike. I absolutely love reading his short stories, and even his poems. His work made me want to do some of my own. My other brother, Danny, is also an influence. I have only read a few of his stories, but the way he makes words come alive is thrilling. As far as content goes, I am influenced by books, movies, music, and just generally the world around me.