

odyssey oracle

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Year 8 #2 September 15, 2010

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EXCITED Wins the Adjective Contest

adjective: any word used to modify a noun by limiting, qualifying, or specifying, as in the *big* dog or the *brightest* star

In response to the question, “How did you feel when you learned you’d been accepted into this class?” you used many adjectives. Seventeen of you chose “excited” (or “very excited,” “extremely excited,” “so excited,” or “super excited”).

Here are other adjectives chosen:

Happy (6)
Nervous (4)
Overwhelmed (2)
Thankful (2)
Grateful (2)
Humbled
Elated
Empowered
Afraid
Good
Relieved
Ecstatic
Fantastic
Surprised
Blessed
Relieved
Great
Proud
Lucky
Wonderful



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Sailing out of the Harbor: The Odyssey Begins

On September 8, 2010, the eighth year of the UW Odyssey Project began.

Here are a dozen examples of how you described your feelings when you learned you'd been accepted into the Odyssey Class of 2011:

I was extremely excited and humbled. I felt like all the weight I was carrying was lifted off.
(**Morgan Chichester**)

I was very excited, overjoyed, and could not stop thinking about the first day. I thought this is a good start to the next level of my life.
(**Tracy Cunnigan**)

I was actually overwhelmed that I was even considered to be chosen for one of the 30 spots. Truthfully I was very happy.
(**Dwayne Ellis**)

I felt excited, elated, and empowered. I also felt a little afraid but in a good way. Lastly I just felt good, knowing I am starting my educational future with the Odyssey Project!
(**Eleita Florence**)

I was super excited, relieved, nervous, and ecstatic! I am very grateful and thankful!
(**Ray 'Migizi' Hopp**)

Fantastic, unbelievable!!! Could this possibly be happening to me? This has got to be a part of God's will. This door would not have opened by my own will, but His will be done. What did I say or do that Emily accepted me?
(**Kathann Jackson**)

I was excited! I have been waiting forever to be given an amazing opportunity! I cannot wait to get started!
(**Leah LaBarre**)

I was super excited and surprised! Nothing really goes right my way.
(**Precious LaShore**)

I felt great, very excited, and eager to learn new things and meet new people. This class will give me a tremendous opportunity to get where I am trying to go. (**Marseills McKenzie**)

I felt like my life could finally begin again.
(**Stephanie Pamperin**)

My family and friends were telling me how proud they were of me. It opened my eyes to the opportunity that has been given me. (**Eric Rodgers**)

I was very excited. I felt a life transformation starting. (**Danielle Rosales**)



Odysseus at the Laestrygonians

Are You a Writer?



(Takeyla Benton)

Yes, I am a writer! Writing is my life and the only thing (besides my kids) that helps me get through each day. Writing and words are the easiest way for me to express emotions of any kind and the healthiest way to share my experiences with others.



I'd rather talk to people in person. I hate red pens.
(Kian Cunningham)

I have a high terrorist alert anxiety about school, reading, or writing. I feel like I can't do anything right but clean. I have my own cleaning business, and honestly that's the only thing I do right. I even had anxiety about coming here tonight. I hate writing.



(Michelle Bozeman)

I write what I feel and can express myself better through my words. I used to love to write poetry about how I felt at times. My goal is for this class to get me inspired again and get my thoughts out. I write from the heart and soul and love to do it.



To be honest I don't consider myself to be a writer because I don't write often. I do enjoy the idea of writing. I would love to be a great writer someday.
(Dwayne Ellis)



As a teenager I wrote a lot of poetry that I shared with family and friends. My writing even got me noticed at my home church. Every Youth Sunday I would have a prepared piece ready to share.

(Morgan Chichester)



do it so that I'm not the only one who understands me. **(Eleita Florence)**

I love to write poetry and stories of all kinds. You can transform and escape through writing. The creativity you can express through writing is endless. I've written poems and stories in the past, but I've written them in *my own way*. I would like to learn to



I have never thought of myself as a writer; however, I can be. My goal for myself is to become a better writer, learn how to express myself better with words, and basically use my people skills on paper.
(Tracy Cunnigan)



I consider myself a writer who often gets writer's block due to inner turmoil. I'd love to one day complete my life story. My goals as a writer are to have confidence, wisdom, accuracy, knowledge, and completion in my writings.
(Bonita Greer)



No, I do not consider myself a writer because sometimes it's hard for me to express exactly what I want to write. Sometimes I second guess myself and my ability to spell everything correctly so I don't try or don't finish what I start. In school my

teacher let my classmates and me grade each other's papers. Some students were cruel and made me feel like not wanting to ever write again. (**Kiara Hill**)



I like writing but it has been a long time since I really have written anything. I have had some teachers that have said that I wouldn't be able to ever graduate and also family members that have said I would never be anything. But I used to write all the time when I

was younger. (**Marie Hill**)



I have done some poetry in the past and am open to allowing myself to write and show some of my creativity through writing. (**Ray 'Migizi' Hopp**)



NO!!! I never considered myself a writer, even though this new change in my life as a student forces me to have to write. Sometimes I take notes in church. God is the most important thing to me, and the Holy Bible is His direction, wisdom, and

instructions. Now I write for MATC and UW along with Jesus! I like that. (**Kathann Jackson**)



Yes, I am a writer. I have much to say and a lot of issues I would like to address concerning me and my life. I make songs of different kinds such as rap, poetry, and gospel. (**Trendell Johnson**)



I guess I do love to write, but to be honest, since my daughter was born I haven't done much with it. I love poetry and beautiful novels. I love how words flow together and describe life just how it is. Words are absolutely beautiful to me.

I've just written for hours when my life felt unbearable, and after that I at least felt like I got it off my chest. (**Leah LaBarre**)



I've found it a lot easier to write since having my son because with new life comes outstanding new experiences. There is never a dull moment.

(**Precious LaShore**)



I have made up all kinds of stories in grade and high school and was published then. I have always thought of reading and writing as an escape route from a not-so-nice childhood. The goal I have is to take the time and energy to get back to where I once was. (**Pamela Lee**)



My feelings on writing are open. I have a strong interest in writing, and it goes beyond my imagination. It's exciting and challenging, and I'm ready for the challenge. In high school there was a class called Creative

Writing. I guess I was too involved in sports and girls—sorry. Now I want to make up for time wasted. **(Dennis Listenbee)**



I love writing anything, just as long as I can have it on paper and look back at it a few years later down the road. I like to write but I hate it that I can't spell the words out correctly or get my story to mean the same as my thoughts.

(Diance Lor)



I used to write when I was locked up or when I was younger. Writing for me now is a way out—I write a lot. I write poetry when something bothers me instead of sharing my emotions with people.

(Michael Lozano)



I used to write poetry and short stories. I feel I could do better at it as far as punctuation and maybe the spelling of some words. I am not ashamed to look in the dictionary.

(Catina McAlister)



I am not a good writer but I would like to be. Sometimes I just can't find the right words to say. I have not written since high school, so maybe things have changed. I will not give up on writing—I will do my best.

(Nikyra McCann)



Yes, I am a poet who paints pictures with poems. Degrees of pain and despair enchant me to write, so beautifully and smoothly breezing through life so coolly, a gift from God I must reply, nor should I deny this gift that

I've been blessed with. . . .

(Marseills McKenzie)



Yes, we all have a writer in us. Everybody has a story, regardless of whether it's tragic, eloquent, or beautiful. We all have something to say.

(Helen Montgomery)



To be completely honest, I don't consider myself a writer but maybe a procrastinator with the potential to write. Being a writer implies that I actually engage in the act of writing. I don't. I definitely feel the need,

though. I hope this class will help me conquer my fears of inadequacy. **(Dalonte Nobles)**



I love every last detail about writing. I do write poems of all kinds, but because of my shyness I haven't shared any of it with anyone since I was in my senior year in high school. I'm not afraid to say I'm a pretty good poet,

but you would never know it because of how painfully shy I am and the lack of encouragement and confidence in myself.

(Shardetra Ofori-Anim)



Writing saved my life many times, and my love of words has made it possible for me to do many things, such as overcome the trauma of abuse. I have always had a gift when it comes to words, and I often joke

with friends that all I own are books and movies. Writing is my most authentic prayer, and the rest of the world fades when I place pen to paper.

(Stephanie Pamperin)



I like to write but have problems expressing myself with words, and that makes me afraid to write. I have so much to say inside that I feel like I'm trapped in myself. I need to work on finding the right words to say.

(Edwina Robinson)



I've always loved writing and consider myself a "writer-in-training." As a child and until this day, I have an undying thirst for reading. Reading was an experience of mine that led me to being a natural writer. Somehow,

subconsciously I picked up on the various novels and authors' writing styles and incorporated it within my own. **(Eric Rodgers)**



I would like to think of myself as a writer but I don't spend much time actually writing. I think about words, how they flow together, and how they sound as a complete thought. Spelling stumps me and makes my writing

unreadable.

(Danielle Rosales)



My goal in this class as a writer is to open up my mind and heart to the things I can change and to tell my heart to soar. I'm really into music, and writing is a big plus. I look forward to being a part of the class because I have

heard so much about the program.

(Mark Rowe)

Don't Quit! By Joe Robinson

My advice to the new Odyssey class is don't quit. No matter how hard it gets, don't quit.

When you get off work at 5:30, and you only have 30 minutes to get the kids situated and get to class, don't quit.

When you get stuck in the middle of writing a paper or doing a project, don't quit.

When you find out that your father has cancer and has to have surgery and treatment, don't quit.

When you have circumstances that occur that make you miss a class and you get behind on your work, don't quit.

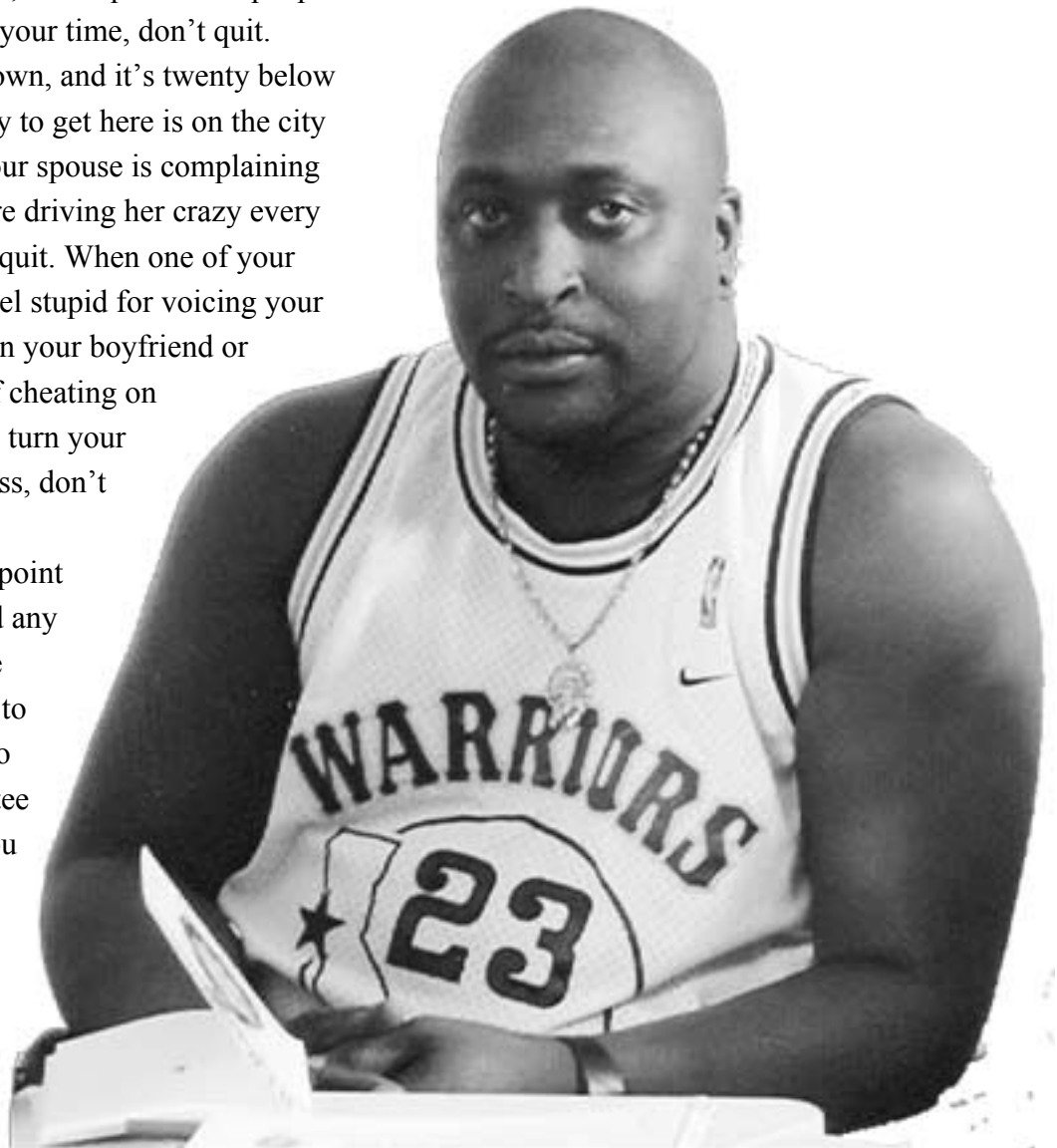
When you feel as if you're not getting anything out of a particular subject, don't quit. When people tell you you are wasting your time, don't quit. When your car breaks down, and it's twenty below outside, and the only way to get here is on the city bus, don't quit. When your spouse is complaining that your five children are driving her crazy every Wednesday night, don't quit. When one of your classmates makes you feel stupid for voicing your opinion, don't quit. When your boyfriend or girlfriend accuses you of cheating on them because you had to turn your cell phone off during class, don't quit.

And if you get to the point where you just can't find any more motivation to force yourself to keep coming to this class, my advice is to call Emily, and I guarantee you that she won't let you quit! There were many times that I wanted to just give up, but Emily would not let me. She believed in us more than some of

us believed in ourselves.

Finally, I would like to say that, the first couple of weeks, I was in class trying to figure out, what is the catch? Why are these people offering us this course for free? There must be a catch. I found out what the catch was. Each one of the teachers was trying to trick us into believing that our lives would somehow be better if we completed this Odyssey class and then go on to graduate from college. I guess I must be a little naïve, because I fell for it, hook, line, and sinker.

Joe Robinson is a graduate of the 2003-2004 Odyssey Project.



Search Engines By Molinda Henry

I am traveling on this Odyssey, and every day since embarking I have changed. I have learned, I have grown, and I have writhed back and forth, side to side, like waves on the ocean, from growing pains.

Before this class I didn't consider myself a reader, and now I can't wait to get my hands on the next book. I carry the dictionary we received on the first day of class everywhere I go.

There is no word created yet for the process that began the day I was accepted as a student in Odyssey. Someday, like *Google*, there will be a new word added to our vocabulary that can describe the search engine that Emily and Gene and Jean and Craig and Marshall, Diane, and my most highly regarded classmates have helped me become.

Search Engine. Yes. That is what I said. I have become a search engine, but from a different perspective. I am now the "little engine that could" search for knowledge, truth, and wisdom. And I endeavor to become a proficient search engine, objective, critical, and hungry for more. Thanks to this Odyssey with these Titans, I too have found my task: To Learn and Be Free.



Molinda (Odyssey class of 2007) graduated from UW-Madison in May 2010.