

May D.E.A.R. Contest

In the boxes below you will find 11 quotations. Five are from award-winning 21<sup>st</sup> Century novelists, who would qualify for the grade 12 ILRP-novel list. The other six quotations are taken from short stories written by Ms Giardinne's and Mr Go's Writer's Craft students. If you can tell the difference between an amateur writer and a professional writer, fill in the form at the bottom of this file, print it off and hand it to Mr. Webster in room 123 or room 127. The first three correct students will win a gift certificate from Chapters/Indigo. The students will also have their names announced on the P.A. system with the inferred understanding that they are exceedingly clever.

<p>1. She ate with us regularly, argued with us constantly, and introduced me to a new breed I'd never encountered before: a left-wing, art-loving, self-proclaimed "spiritual person" who chose to convey her gentle ideas about peace and love and nature by screaming at you.</p> <p>"You know what your problem is, Martin?" she asked Dad one night after dinner. "You're choosing books over life. I don't think books are supposed to be a substitute for life, you know. They are more of a compliment."</p>
<p>2. My mum smiled back at me. She was wearing the green scarf my dad had sent her in the very last package we received. She wore it tied tight at the back of her head, which was the same way the rebels wore their bandanas. Her hair was pulled back in a tight bun. It gave her an air of defiance. Her mouth clamped down, her nostrils flared. My father used to say that she had the blood of righteousness running in her veins. She should have been a churchwoman, he'd say, because persuasiveness for my mum was not an intellectual exercise. Quality of argument was neither here nor there. It was all about the intensity of belief. And every part of her—_from the whites of her eyes to the muscular calves—rallied on her behalf.</p>
<p>3. "Heated mattress pads are half off!" she exclaimed, as her earrings – baublish black balls with cat faces decorating the fronts – dangled distractingly from her ears like frenzied horseflies chained from the neck. Mother seemed to express happiness, impatience, confusion, distress, excitement, and anger in that same custom she expressed bewilderment, but with varying extremes of hysteria, animation and openness of the oral cavity – all subtle adjustments from which you could decipher the root emotion. Her present state, if you'd have me guess, must have been part anger and part brazen menopausal hot flash, but I was way off.</p>
<p>4. Blood, the baby is dead, hospital, she's dead too, casket. Janice died in a car crash when I was young. When people ask me about it I say it was a long time ago. Except people hardly ask me about it, understandably, that sort of conversation always makes somebody uncomfortable. Not me, usually, the other person. Maybe because they feel that my wound has healed and if they ask it will start seeping some garish pus or something. Maybe because they feel it will be an invasion of my privacy, as if the crash is like some sort of film in my head that's on repeat and it goes red light, intersection, crash, red light, intersection, crash. Well it's not. It's just a stagnant photo, and that's the problem. Fast forward fourteen years.</p>
<p>5. He was angry most days, at first he sought out his various lovers, but he was moody with them, he failed to be entertaining, and worse, he'd lost interest in the sex. He stopped answering their e-messages—Is anything wrong, was it something I did, how can I help—and didn't return their calls: explaining wasn't worth it. In earlier days he would have made his mother's death into a psychodrama, harvested some sympathy, but that wasn't what he wanted now.</p> <p>What did he want?</p>
<p>6. For the first time in years, David was dreaming, not imagining, a pawn not a player, a servant to destiny or God.</p> <p>They spoke for hours of jewels and records, or African bees and the seven seas. Her eyes shone like the golden detail of David's palace, guarded by the barriers that were her long lashes. Her laugh could conquer the Persians and shatter all their diamonds to fragments beneath the sand, to be discovered by archaeologists from a distant generation with obnoxious Jeeps and bifocals.</p>
<p>7. George Theodore Mince was sitting proudly on the big leather cushion of the wheely chair in his father's office. His feet dangled a foot above the ground and the mahogany desk reached his chest. No one could know he was here. If he was found, Mrs. Pedlum would scold him severely and, like always tell father. George hated his</p>

nanny. She was old and ugly, and smelled like the mildew of an old couch. But, now was not the time to be thinking of such distracting things. He knew it was in here somewhere and had to find it. All the other boys were counting on him. He slid off the chair and quietly tiptoed across the rug to the set of drawers just left of the window. He opened the bottom drawer, peaked his head over the rim and saw a heavy stack of files and folders, old photo albums, a package of cigarettes, a deck of cards, and three old neckties. It wasn't in this drawer. Drawer number two was very high. On his tippy toes he could just make out another even more dense collection of papers. The third drawer was much too far out of reach. This required a chair. George pulled from across the room the large office chair and climbed on board. Now he could comfortably reach out, pull open the final drawer, and see what he was looking for. Hand curled around the handle, adrenalin pumping, He opened up the drawer and saw exactly what he needed. He couldn't believe it; his fingers were now firmly grasping the object when a high pitched "George" came from behind him.

8. Everything has come from Mother Earth in this way. Cars, ploughs, televisions, cloths, electricity. Ourselves. Gathered processed moulded, ignited. If all this had happened in a flash we would call it magic—lions freeing themselves from the clay, soldiers springing up from serpents' teeth, lightning snaking from the tip of a wand, language from our mouths.

But it did not happen in a flash. It happened over time. The age of the earth was necessary to create it all, and the minds and the bodies of many people, and so it is called science. Humans can only work the magic in reverse. Returning it all to the earth and the atmosphere in one great flash.

9. The golden horizon seemed to fit perfectly with the dawn of the day as the Smith's were cruising past lush green country sides, the corn was golden yellow and had a gentle sway as the breeze blew over the fields with an eddies kind of current that turned the fields to water like waves. There were only a few other cars on the road each a mile away from the other, it wasn't a busy road, no many lived around here and in the morning, if you were lucky enough to make it through the night, then the site of the golden orange sunrise slowly creeping its way over the treeless hills would bring tears to your eyes. Now if you were caught out in the night, without shelter then either you would make friends with the coyotes and get a rare inside tour of their stomach or you would soil yourself if you wound up under the scrutinizing button eyes of a hay scarecrow wearing old tattered rags to cover its body during those cold winter nights.

10. He was remembering the nights he'd sat upstairs with one or both of his boys or with his girl in the crook of his arm, their damp bath-smelling heads hard against his ribs as he read aloud to them from *Black Beauty* or *The Chronicles of Narnia*. How his voice alone, its palpable resonance, had made them drowsy. These were evenings, and there were hundreds of them, maybe thousands, when nothing traumatic enough to leave a scar had befallen the nuclear unit. Evenings of plain vanilla closeness in his black leather chair; sweet evenings of doubt between the nights of uncertainty. They came to him now, these forgotten counterexamples, because in the end, when you were falling into water, there was no solid thing to reach for but your children.

11. Gloria Melonbloom was a pot-smoking atrophied 8th Grade Art teacher. Her young students were the only worthy recipients of her artistic guidance, she believed, as they were by and large untainted by the vile of "bureaucrats who step on our canvasses and our souls." But she was not a bitter being – rather, she saw herself as an artistic visionary whose job was to nurture and inspire. Gloria was slightly heavy set. She wore rose-coloured glasses, flowing earth tone dashikis, and Keds. Her hair was long, blonde, and frayed, with thin strands poking out into the air like curious bolts of lightning. Everything quite perfectly framed and drew focus to her face – an experimental zone of newly developing wrinkles and a mouth that endlessly decided between two functions: to droop contemplatively, or smile with sweetness.

Official D.E.A.R. Answer Sheet: Please circle or highlight the correct choice for the 11 quotations:

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Form \_\_\_\_\_

Quotation	Writer's Craft Student	Professional Writer
1	Writer's Craft Student	Professional Writer
2	Writer's Craft Student	Professional Writer
3	Writer's Craft Student	Professional Writer
4	Writer's Craft Student	Professional Writer
5	Writer's Craft Student	Professional Writer
6	Writer's Craft Student	Professional Writer
7	Writer's Craft Student	Professional Writer
8	Writer's Craft Student	Professional Writer
9	Writer's Craft Student	Professional Writer
10	Writer's Craft Student	Professional Writer
11	Writer's Craft Student	Professional Writer