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Interviewing an Author: Don't Be Left Speechless

By Stephen Earley Jordan

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by: **Stephen Earley Jordan**

Edited by Jenny Wilson

Joyce Carol Oates. Langston Hughes. Anne Sexton. F. Scott Fitzgerald. Nikki Giovanni. The names of authors (dead and alive) can go on and on. But I'll let you have first pick!

You are in a room with some of your favorite authors. About ten of them. However, you are only allowed to invite one of them to Starbucks for a couple of chocolate mochas. Just you and your favorite author. It doesn't matter if the writer is deceased—use your imagination! After all, you're a writer, right?

Oh dear, who shall it be? Should it be William Shakespeare with his purple pantaloons; Sylvia Plath who now vows to use an electric oven instead of gas; or should it be Maya Angelou and old playmates from her broken-hearted brothel?

Finally, you have selected an author.

You take him (or her) to Starbucks. You order the mochas. You sit down. As you open your mouth to ask the author questions nothing useful comes out.

What's the problem?

Often times we'll chance upon moments when we can interview an author. And, with technology nowadays, methods of research and brainstorming have changed slightly.

1. Research the Author

Ask yourself, "Is the author self-published or published in a traditional publishing house?"

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Actually, does it really matter?! No. Why? Because you're going to need to treat all authors the same—with much respect. Be laid back, and in turn, the interviewee will become comfortable and open—up to you.

After all, whether published or not, we're all human. Before the interview, however, use your investigative reporting skills and attempt to discover as much as you can about the author. Surf the Internet for any hidden agendas internet—published writings the writer may have. Not only do you want to know about the author's book, but the personal life as well. Find out what makes the author tick.

2. Research their genre and subject matter

Does the author write poetry? Historical nonfiction? Dramatic nonfiction? Children's literature? Discover how easy or difficult it is to publish in that particular area of writing. Before you meet up with

the author, you must know their genre, as well as the basic themes. If the author writes only historical nonfiction—what's their subject matter? Pre—civil war? Early African Slave Trade? Cuban artwork? Compare and contrast authors in similar subject matters.

Learn as much as you can while you can. And, at the same time, be sure to formulate an opinion about the subject matter, whether it be pro or con. This will allow you to ask more in depth questions.

3. Don't Interrupt

Remember to ask your question then shut up. This isn't a time for you to reminisce of your (waning) writing skills. This is moment for the author to be in the spotlight. Listen to their responses, and make sure that you have a rebuttal question prepared in the back of your head.

After you are away from that particular topic, be sure to go to your next question. Though you may have your list of questions—it's okay to ask the questions out—of—order. Actually, I highly recommend to adlib the questions. This will make the questions seem a bit more unforced. In short, treat your interview as if it's just a regular discussion amongst friends.

Above all, I highly recommend to record the interview. Before you display your trusty hand—held recorder, ask the interviewee for permission to record them. Keep and label all used tapes with the author's name, date and location of the interview. You never know when that once self—published novelist will become the next Best Seller.

Stephen Jordan has five years experience within the educational publishing industry. Stephen was a freelance editor with such educational foundations as Princeton Review, The College Board, New York University, and Columbia University. Away from the office, Stephen promotes his creative writing with his home—freelance business OutStretch Publications and his artwork. Stephen holds two Bachelor of Arts degrees in writing and literature from Alderson—Broaddus College of Philippi, West Virginia

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A Speechless Expression

By Nilesh Gore

By Nilesh Gore –

One Day I went to see the painting exhibition of children under 12 in the City. While observing the beautiful paintings, I found one quite different from others. It was the painting of very expressive & shrine face, the smiling lips was expressing the happiness and ultimate inspiration, Eyebrows was expressing ambition & hopes, and ears seems like they are ready to listen the sounds of god. Everything was divine except the closed eyes. I asked "Why is it so?" to the boy who painted it, He replied "This is a picture of my sister, She was killed before she opens her eyes." he paused for a couple of seconds and before I ask anything he started again "My parents killed her in hospital, after some test they came to know that my mom was having girl child. If she would be alive today she could be more beautiful than this painting." Now I was speechless & understood the meaning of killing. I sense the pain behind the painting and the pain that 12 year old boy can realize and I also realized that the painting was not representing the outward appearance of the face, but the inward significance of the shrine face.

I was speechless & shocked by his explanation of the expression of the painting, He was a courageous boy, and I Did not dared to ask any more question to him. Only he knows how he knew it about the abortion or killing. Actually he was right and also termed it right "The killing" This reminded me what Mother Teresa said " The greatest destroyer of peace & Humanity is abortion because if they can kill or if they can force to kill her own child then what is left for me to kill you and you to kill me? There is nothing between. It's killing..."

A 12 year Boy Spoke about the Speechless Expression and made me Speechless and showed me difference between 12 and 25.

Thanks for your time consideration Nilesh Gore

About Author : Nilesh Gore :- Professionally author is graphologist & psychological counselor & involved in Personality Assessment / Character analysis, Child development, personality Development, Marital –Educational & parental Counseling, Selection of Business Partner & Life Partner, helping bank officials to detect fraud signature, helping people managing their strengths & weaknesses. You can reach him for any problem on email given at the end. He is also working on `Graphotherapy' i.e. managing emotional health via handwriting. He has also written several articles for several websites. you can contact him on following addresses.

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