

**Reminiscent Teacher Essay**  
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### **Importance of Vocabulary**

**Every fall in the first-grade year, handwriting was a required subject in the curriculum. We made the mandatory lines, slants, and circles. Some papers created by students were beautiful, others needed help. But Charles' paper was a disaster. He wasn't even close to keeping the letter formations on the baseline of the paper. His letters roller coasted left to right down the line. No two letters were the same. All I felt I could do was to hope that Charles would become a doctor or a lawyer so his dismal handwriting wouldn't affect his job.**

**Just before Thanksgiving, Charles brought from home a paper on which he had drawn the head of George Washington. It was exactly like the one on the one dollar bill. So I asked him how he did it. Thank goodness for the honesty first graders have when they are telling their teacher a story. Charles mentioned how he got out a sheet of paper from his dad's desk and put the dollar bill next to the paper. The he said that he looked at the picture and drew the image.**

**Believing he had the ability to be a human copy machine, I opened our social studies book and asked him if he thought he could draw one of the portraits in the book. He was delighted to try. He sat down at his desk with a sheet of our drawing paper and worked uninterrupted for about two hours. When he was done, it was an exact copy of the portrait in the book.**

**The next day when we had handwriting, class, I asked Charles to draw the letters. His paper changed instantly from roller coaster letters to a page of letters picture perfect of the book sample. That day, he helped me learn that the words write and draw can have two different results for students. No other students I had in class over the years of teaching first grade had as dramatic a change in their performance as Charles did. But maybe my use of both words when teaching handwriting helped other students to see and understand the task more clearly.**

**Charles was a military dependent; therefore, I never kept track of him after he left my classroom. I just hope that he is using his artistry talent somewhere in our wonderful country.**