**Teacher says:**  We are going on a journey and on the journey we will come upon six items. Describe each item exactly as it appears when you hear the name of the item.

There are two rules to this activity:

* I am going to give you one minute each to describe the items as we come to them. As soon as I mention the item, begin writing and do not stop until I tell you to do so.  Be sure to describe the first thing that pops into your head no matter how outrageous.
* Do not talk during the activity because it will disrupt the vision of another writer. If I ask you to describe an “apple,” one writer might see a juicy Pink Lady apple with a chunk bitten out of the side of it while another writer might see a tart green Granny Smith apple with a worm in a top hat hanging on the stem.  If the Pink Lady writer says “Yum, I love Pink Ladies” then poof! Granny Smith suddenly turns into a Pink Lady and that writer’s vision has been corrupted by another.

**Teacher says:**

You are walking through the forest. Describe the trees.

(One minute writing)

You continue in the forest and on the path, you notice some keys. Describe the keys.

(One minute writing)

You continue in the forest and on the path, you notice a cup. Describe the cup.

(One minute writing)

You continue in the forest and you come to a wall. Not only describe the wall, but tell me what you do when you come to the wall.

(One minute writing)

You go pass the wall and continue in the forest. You notice a bear in the path. Describe the bear.

(One minute writing)

You have finally come to the end of our journey. You have made it through the forest and come to a beautiful sunny meadow. Before you enter the meadow, you come to a stream. Describe the stream and what you do when you come to the stream.

(One minute writing)

Tell students that each of these items represents something in their life, but that they have to make the connections. As I tell students what each item means (after they’ve finished writing), I reveal my answers and make a connection for them.  For example, when I first did this activity (in psychology class in college), I saw tall, thin birch trees with no leaves and white spots on the bark.  The trees were crowded together and the forest felt claustrophobic.  I explain to students that the trees represents “parents” and I could see many similarities with my picture and my parents – my parents were tall and thin, both were much older when I was born, and they were very strict and narrow in their understanding of the world.

Have one or two students share their pictures and you make the connections for them to show them how easy it is – generally students see leafy trees over their heads – and I always tell them that their parents are protective of them, covering them with their love, etc. You make this up as you go along – the key is to get them to start thinking abstractly instead of literally about one of these subjects.

The Key:

Trees = Parents

Keys = Money

Cup = Love

Wall = Problems and what you do to the wall represents how you solve your problems

Bear = Death

Stream = Afterlife and what you do represents if you embrace/reject your ideal eternity

Using the information retrieved from your psyche, write a ten-line poem that is an extended metaphor starting with the line that identifies the item and its abstract counterpart.

Example of first verse:

*Love is a Dunkin Donuts cup*

*Dirty leaves dot the bottom*

*lipstick stains ruin the rim.*