

# Teacher Talk

BOOKS 1-4

A COLLECTION OF MAGAZINE ARTICLES  
FOR TEACHERS

**Special  
Edition**

— ◆ —  
**with new material**

BY  
**MARSHA MARIE**

**FREE DOWNLOAD**

*Another exciting addition  
to the*  
**BANGLES Series!**



*Get your free copy of the hilarious "Crowded Bangles" when you sign up to the author's VIP mailing list. Get started here:  
<http://marshamarie.wixsite.com/newslettersignup>*

★ ★ ★  
CROWDED BANGLES-  
FOR MATURE  
AUDIENCES ONLY

## Other titles by Marsha Marie

*Rose-Colored Bangles: A Collection of Poems*

*Bangles: My True Story of Escape, Adventure and Forgiveness*

*Sandi's Sweets Coloring Book Series*

*Bangles to Mom: Letters from Pakistan*

*Crowded Bangles: How I Should've Driven My Co-Wife Crazy*

*The Gift: a mini-memoir*

*Teacher Talk: A Collection of Magazine Articles for Teachers, Books 1-4*

*Dodged Bullet: A Night with a Lollywood Superstar*

*Legally Blonde in UAE: a mini-memoir*

*75 Things You Should Know About Working in a Call Center: A Fun Look at Life on  
the Phones*

Teacher Talk, Books 1-4 –Special Edition

Teacher Talk, Books 1-4  
A Collection of Magazine Articles for Teachers  
Special Edition

By Marsha Marie

©2017 by Y. K., a.k.a. Marsha Marie

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof may not be reproduced in any form, stored in any retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means – electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise – without prior written permission of the publisher, except for the use of brief quotations in a book review or as provided by United States of America copyright law. For permission requests, write to the publisher at “Attention: Permissions Coordinator,” at [marsha@marshamarie.com](mailto:marsha@marshamarie.com).

Published by Y. K. ‘Marsha Marie’, Arizona

Email: [marsha@marshamarie.com](mailto:marsha@marshamarie.com)

Visit the author’s website at [www.marshamarie.com](http://www.marshamarie.com).

Portions of this book have been previously published in UAE.

This is a work of nonfiction.

Edited by Marsha Marie.

Book cover by Marsha Marie.

**This book is dedicated to learning.**

“A good teacher is like a candle – it consumes itself to light the way for others.”

(Mustafa Kemal Atatürk)

**From the author:**

Hi. I'm Marsha "Yasmine" Marie.

I was born in Ohio, but was raised in Phoenix, Arizona. At 25, I found myself trapped in a difficult and abusive marriage. Out of desperation, I went against court orders and threw myself into a 22-year-long self-exile in Asia. I ended up in a remote farming village in Pakistan with my two small children in tow—ages three and five. I lived in that incredibly modest farming village for the next 14 years; knowing that I could not return to my homeland in the States.

Although the 14 years in the village was lived out surprisingly pleasant, I yearned for a change of scenery and lifestyle. I then packed up and moved to *big city* of Islamabad. Once there I gained invaluable life experience. For instance, I joined the faculty of one of the most popular universities—teaching English and communication skills. I also trained American Accent to call center agents. I volunteered as member of a human rights committee monitoring jail conditions, and I did lots of voice-over work for local radio. Surprisingly enough, one of the local TV stations even decided to make me the topic of a mini-documentary. (Too funny to watch, really!)

Two years later, I was off spreading my wings again—this time to the United Arab Emirates. It was an amazing experience indeed. There I continued my English teaching studies and received an influential CELTA certification from the University of Cambridge in London. After which, I was given the opportunities to teach in a college, university, in private homes, royal palaces (training sheikhs and princesses). I was also invited to hold classes for the President's staff at his office in Al Ain. The most challenging of all was when I worked as Head of English Department for a year at a K-12 school with over 1,000 students. (Now that was a handful!) Altogether, I taught English writing and communication skills in UAE for about seven amazing years—loving every minutes of it! (Okay,,,almost every minute of it.)

After up-keeping a few websites and blogs for my students as part of my teaching toolbox, I was requested to do some article writing for a couple of local magazines. They were mainly about English language development and mini-memoir pieces. It was during this time of my life that I fell deeply in love with writing and with its process; and I longed to continue with it. Recognizing that my life's story was unique, I knew that I would eventually write a book; but just didn't know when. I would tell myself, "*Not yet Marsha.*"

Long story short, I am back in the States and sharing my story with the world. I have dozens of magazine articles that were just hidden away; so I decided to republish them and share with teachers around the world. I hope you enjoy them in the series of four books; I also hope you will be interested in the rest of my story. (As a bonus, I have added chapter one of my full-length memoir, *Bangles: My True Story of Escape, Adventure and Forgiveness.*)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Contents:**

**My 10 Most Memorable Moments in the Classroom**

**Teacher Talk, Book 1**

**Teacher Talk, Book 2**

**Teacher Talk, Book 3**

**Teacher Talk, Book 4**

**Bonus Chapter from *Bangles***

\*\*\*\*\*

## My 10 Most Memorable Moments in the Classroom

### 1. Meeting *My Bodyguard*

I was in class in Pakistan. It was around 2006, and I was in the first day of one of my training classes. I had a fresh new batch of call center agents that were thrown in with me to learn American accent. It was an 8-hour class, and the day was going along swimmingly. The first four hours we just sat in class chatting about the comparisons of America and Pakistan. Suddenly, one of the young men, in his early 20's, jumped up and yelled, "I am in love with this woman!"

I was in shock. "How funny," I thought while my cheeks turned bright red. The class just looked at him and mumbled something to the person sitting next to them. I honestly thought the boy was kidding. But as the days, weeks and months went by, he showed himself to be telling the truth. This boy was totally smitten with me. He followed me around, bullied anyone that he felt was getting too close to me, and asked me out many times. "I'm sorry," I said, "but I'm just too old for you. I'm like 18 years older than you," I tried to tell him as nicely as possible. "You'll forget me someday, and find someone your own age."

"I will always love you Ms. Yasmine. Always. If you ever need me, I'm here for you." He said with his hand over his heart---a common Pakistani gesture to show earnest.

After that, I nicknamed him *My Bodyguard*, and everyone at the call center knew him just as that. If someone was ever bugging me, all I had to do was call his name.

### 2. Flashing a Student

Again in Pakistan, I was teaching the American accent class. My students were working on the computer program in which they recorded sentences, then I would come and listen to the recordings and give them feedback. Each time, I would stand directly opposite of them (on the other side of the computer table), and the student would give me their headsets so I could listen. One day, I grabbed the headset from the student and lifted it to my head. I didn't know that the headset had somehow caught the bottom of my shirt. As the headset went up, so did my shirt. I yanked it down as soon as I realized what was happening. The boy just politely looked away and acted as if he didn't notice; but I know he did.

Yep. This is one my most memorable moments for sure.

### 3. Getting Double Paid for Months

After the call center job, I accepted a position with one of the top universities in Islamabad. The salary was such an improvement compared to what I was making at the call center that I really thought that I had hit the jack-pot. But as it turned out, I was being double-paid by accident for several months—and I had no idea. This continued until one day they discovered it, and pulled me into the office to ask for the over-paid money back. I could have just died from embarrassment.

#### 4. The *if*-Conditional Kicked my Butt

After leaving Pakistan, I went to work for a college in Al Ain, UAE. This was the first time that I was teaching out of any kind of structured English workbook; I was clearly out of my element. My very first day in January 4, 2008, I was thrown into a level 3 English class. The topic of the day was the *if*-conditionals. “What the hell is an *if*-conditional?” I thought to myself.

I was so embarrassed to tell the students I had no idea what the book was talking about. Finally, one of the college girls began explaining them to me. “This is one. This is two. And this is the third one.” She explained them to me one-by-one; going over the examples slowly with the other students looking on.

No way, will I ever forget that day, nor will I ever forget the *if*-conditionals; even if I were to remove my brain. (Get it? ...*if I were?* ---3<sup>rd</sup> conditional right there baby!)

#### 5. The Director Laughed at Me

While in UAE, I moved around to different jobs as my teaching skills developed. In about 2011, I went for an interview somewhere in downtown Dubai. The director was interviewing me while looking over my resume. At first, he was very polite and spoke in a professional manner with me. Then after finishing my resume, he points out to me that I didn’t have a Bachelor’s degree. I tried to explain to him the story of how I ended up in UAE, but he was not interested. He simply started laughing. “What am I supposed to tell the board of directors about you?” He said.

My heart and my confidence literally broke in half. I was not just embarrassed by what he said, but I was humiliated too by his laughter. I walked out the office, sat on the curb of that Dubai street and cried for twenty minutes. That was the interview that made a life-long impression on me; it taught me how *not* to treat people.

Later, when I was head of an English department in Dubai, I would make sure that while interviewing teachers who were trying to join our school, I would never say anything that could

possibly offend them. Instead, I would offer them any type of advice that would help improve their careers.

## **6. Sleeping Beauty**

Of all the classes that I taught while I was in UAE, one of the most annoying classes that I taught was a group of young women that were forced by their family to take a Level One English class. They had no choice, and they made sure that I knew it every day. They were so uncooperative, that I wanted to walk out of the class and never go back in. At times, they would ask me a question, and when I would try to answer politely, they would straight up tell me, “Just write on board. no explain.”

Then, as if that was not rude enough, one day, one of the dominating girls of the group pulled a couple chairs together in the back of the classroom while I was teaching, laid down, and went to sleep. Yes. Right in class!

Let me tell you something, that was the longest 8 weeks of my life.

## **7. The Crying Mom**

Along with regular English classes, I taught many English-proficiency-test preparation classes. They were actually my favorite to teach. I loved my IELTS and TOEFL classes. I had taught them so many times that I had them down to a science. The students were very serious about the classes because they were trying to get into college, and they needed a certain score to do that.

As it was, most of my students in UAE, had sufficient financial support with either the family or the government. But one day, I got a visit from a mother of a young college-aged girl who was attending one of my colleagues TOEFL classes. The mother was weeping---I mean, really weeping. Emotionally she was just broken. She explained to me through her daughter’s English interpretation, that the family had no money for her daughter’s college, and that they were depending on a scholarship; and to get that scholarship, she needed to have a certain score on the writing portion of the English prep-test. The young girl had tried taking the test several times and failed under my colleague’s care. The mother begged me profusely to help her. “Please. Please. You have to help us. If you don’t help my daughter, she will not go to college,” she said through her daughter.

Moved by her tears, I agreed to take on the student. “Yes,” I said with all earnest, “I will help your daughter and make sure that she passes.”

“Oh, thank you!” the mother exclaimed whipping her tears away. “We bring you gold when she passes.”

“No, no,” I insisted. “That is *not* necessary.”

### 8. My Broker is Calling

One of my favorite students of all time, is Sultan Ahmed, a member of the royal family in UAE. He is a sleek, successful businessman with the unmistakably, inherited family nose. He lives half the time in England, and half in Al Ain with his family. He took English classes from me to improve his conversational English. I loved our classes together. They were full of intelligent and thoughtful conversation---I would correct him whenever I felt it necessary.

Each class, he would have his servant bring in 2 cups of green tea, and 2 bottles of water. “Always drink water immediately afterward tea or coffee, Ms. Yasmine. It keeps your teeth from staining.” This is just one of his memorable teachings to me. At times, I forgot that I was even *in class*. I always looked forward to Sultan’s days at the college.

The funniest thing that I remember from Sultan, was this statement: “Oh, I am sorry Ms. Yasmine. It is my broker calling me. Do you mind? I have to take this call. I need to check the stocks with him.” (His phone, his servant and the stocks’ portion of the newspaper were always present with him; I just learned to accept it.)

‘Um. Sure. No problem,’ I would say.

This same conversation played out each class that we had together; sometimes his broker would call twice during class. A lot of our conversation ended up revolving around the stocks and how they worked---it was the topic at hand, so I just ran with it. (It’s just too bad that I didn’t have three million Durham to play around with, too.)

### 9. My nickname: *The Sheikh-Teacher*

And speaking of Sultan, he was only one of the several royal families that I encountered during my stint in United Arab Emirates. I catered to so many of them, that my nick-name became *the Sheikh-teacher*. It was truly an honor to be able to visit their palaces, and walk the halls of history; as many of the parlors we sat in had incredible, private pictures of the King and his family. One day, I was sitting in one of the parlors and was mesmerized by the jeweled velvet grandeur that spewed out of every corner of the room. Just next to me, was a short table at the end of the couch, with a circular-shaped drawer. I couldn’t resist; I had to see what royalty keeps

inside their drawers. So, I slightly reached over and pulled it open. I peeped inside only to find it was empty. I couldn't help but giggle. (I still find that funny.)

I still don't know for sure what kept them coming and asking for me---was it the customer service that I provided, the amazing English-teaching that I did, or just my blue eyes. I'd like to think it was a bit of all three.

### **10. Farting During Class**

Okay. Now this really is the most humiliating of all. Yes. I admit it. I farted maybe twice in class---still hoping no one heard. But, they were accidents each time, I promise you. I wonder how many other teachers in this world would ever admit to farting in class?

See! I'm amazing *and honest*. Okay. Now you can enjoy the rest of the book. Happy reading!

# Teacher Talk

## BOOK 1

A COLLECTION OF MAGAZINE ARTICLES  
FOR TEACHERS



WRITTEN BY  
**MARSHA MARIE**

### Veni Vidi Vici

It was 1980-something, in a middle-class neighborhood on the west side of Phoenix, a tall, thin, eccentric man with hair like Einstein's, ruled his high school math class with confidence and humor. Although I was awkward and rebellious those days, I couldn't wait each morning to get to Mr. Evanstock's class and see what kind of comical thing he would do next. It was normal for him to dance about like a mad man, quoting historical figures, and then somehow manage to link them to our math lessons. I remember thinking—*what does Caesar have to do with algebra anyway?* But according to Mr. Evanstock, a lot!

But today, how is it, that nearly 30 years later, I can still close my eyes and remember his face, his voice and his favorite saying? He would say "Veni, vidi, vici, I came, I saw, I conquered." He would say it with explosive contagious energy, while clinching one fist tightly in the air—an impression that would last with me a life-time. What is it that Mr. Evanstock had that the other teachers did not?

Being an educator myself, I have often pondered what makes a teacher unforgettable. Leading me to wonder what kind of teacher I am today. So since school season has teachers back to work in full force, it is a perfect time for all of us to do some self-reflection. What kind of educators do we want to be? What makes a *great teacher*? Let's look at some of those qualities.

#### Great teachers:

- **Set high expectations for all students.** (Students love the challenge and will appreciate it later.)
- **Have clear written objectives.**
- **Are prepared and well-organized.** (If we fail to plan, we plan to fail.)
- **Engage students and get them to look at issues in a variety of ways.**
- **Are respectful and form strong relations with their students, showing that they care about them as people.**
- **Master their subjects, are great presenters, and are diverse in methods of lesson delivery.**
- **Are inspirational and communicate well with students and parents.**
- **Are flexible and resourceful.**
- **Are always a student themselves.** (A learner produces a learner.)

- **Are creative, passionate, and humorous.** (Imagine a class without it.)

Regardless of the subject being taught, these are desirable qualities we should all seek. I now understand why I still admire Mr. Evanstock and remember him to this day. He mastered these skills; *he came, he saw, and he conquered* the art of teaching us mathematics. And now, I want to be an educator like him.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Read All About It

Imagine yourself on the busy streets of old London, when you hear a young boy cry out, *EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!!!* These words would ring out every day, enticing those who couldn't wait to get the day's newspaper with the latest news and current events. Now, let's jump forward in time to today. Think of the last time you went to the mall. The most common thing you probably saw was people staring at their mobile phones. (*BB this, and SMS that!*) Instead of the latest local news, folks are more interested in seeing who the latest person is to *LIKE* or *TAG* them on Facebook. Drastic change indeed!

What has happened to the love of *real* reading? You know what I mean, the pleasure and serenity with just sitting down with some book (in any language) and taking your time to embrace the ambiance of a heart-gripping scene as it unfolds in your imagination. Did you know, that statistics show that the average American reads anywhere from 11-15 books a year, and a British reader takes-in about 9 or so? However, I am sure that every teacher reading this today will agree that the number of books *our* students are reading is only a fraction of what we would like it to be. *Can I hear an AMEN?*

So what can we do? I suppose the most basic thing we can do is bring the love of reading back into the forefront. Teachers, and parents alike, *can* make a difference. Here are some great ways to encourage our students and help revitalize this 'lost love'.

1. **Encourage students.** Show them that we care and want them to improve their lives by improving their reading skills. Positive reinforcement from both parents and teachers will go a long way. A word of caution: don't force the students. Instead, try setting up regular timings in which the class--or family--reads quietly together. Let them choose the material

to read, and let them start off light. Remember, we are starting a life-long habit, so don't push.

2. **Be a good model.** Children, who watch their parents and teachers read, are more likely to accept reading as a norm in life, and will follow suit.
3. **Subscribe to periodicals or magazines of student interest.** As they collect the material, set up a personal space in the home as their 'personal library' or 'reading space'. 'Ownership' is exciting for children. In fact, this works well in the classroom, too. With the teacher's input and guidance, it is a great way to show the students different interesting genres.
4. **Schedule regular visits to the library or bookstore.** Give them some time to thumb through and experiment with the types of reading they would enjoy.
5. **Gift with books.** Choose books about the topics, or hobbies, that you know the recipient enjoys. Show them that reading is not just academic—it is for everything in life.
6. **Read out loud to them!** It's fun for any age of student, as well as encourages reading.
7. **Select specific computer games.** Gaming is here to stay, so look for games that involve, lots of reading and thinking to play them.
8. **Encourage them to write a book themselves.** This is a wonderful way to open them up, not only to reading, but to writing too. I have heard about successful class projects that publish a class-authored book of short stories each year. *What a fantastic idea!*

One final note, don't discourage any student that starts a book, but doesn't finish it. We have all started books and decided to let them go. Just encourage them to try another genre or author! Remember, it is never too late to start good habits; they just need us to show them how!

\*\*\*\*\*

### Pitfalls

To me, teaching is the greatest profession in the world. I love it—it's my life's passion! After all, that is why I write about it over and over again. But, teachers are only human, and with time we may develop some unattractive and unproductive habits. Today, I want to share with you some common snares that we need to watch out for in ourselves.

- **Arguing with other teachers in front of the class.** Never argue in front of the students about anything; instead take it to the teachers' lounge.
- **Yelling at students.** Yelling in class only shows that you have lost control. Practice some anger management instead—like yoga or meditation (but not in class, ok?--*hummmmm!*).
- **Making phone calls or chatting online in class.** You only have a few minutes with the students, so make them count.
- **Lacking knowledge, preparation or organization.** Fumbling around and attempting a lesson half-way is just unprofessional, and you will lose credibility with the students.
- **Talking too much.** Excessive talking will only tune the students out. Make sure they get engaged in the lesson at hand.
- **Relying too much on the current pedagogical advice, not taking into account your own instincts, adopting new strategies without fully thinking them through, or teaching the material more than teaching the student.** Find a balance, adapt to your students' needs, and do what is best for them.
- **Talking to the board.** When you talk to the board, you disconnect with the students. Remember this: write, turn, and then talk.
- **Using a student to demonstrate something negative.** Doing so can make them feel signaled out and self-conscious. However, doing the opposite is quite productive—use a student to reinforce positive behavior.
- **Underestimating students.** Believe in your students, and help them to believe in themselves.
- **Not showing passion and enthusiasm for the topic.** The more you show that you love your subject, the more your students will reflect the same emotions.
- **Invalidate students' opinions and viewpoints.** Even if you feel the student's opinion is not totally spot-on, soften your response to them. Squashing their views may hinder them from expressing themselves in the future.
- **Not giving clear explanations.** Give instructions and explanations clearly and slowly the first time—it will save a lot of ambiguity and repeating later.
- **Not giving feedback early/quickly enough.** Whether it is reading or writing assignments, if you don't provide feedback quickly, your future assignment requests will lose their significance to the students.

- **Failing to allow enough time for discussion, exploration, practice, and innovation for students.** Provide them the time they need while discovering a new skill or revisiting an old one.
- **Relying too heavily on exams as means of assessing student learning.** Some students do not have good exam skills. So, keep in mind, there are other ways of indicating if students have learned what they were supposed to learn.
- **Responding with “You should know that” or “I don’t care”.** These statements are destructive and should be avoided at all cost.
- **Failing to assess learning objectives.** Take the time to notice if you have really accomplished what you originally set out to do in each lesson.
- **Getting too familiar with students.** There should always be a distinct line between teacher and student; if you don’t cross the line, neither will they. Of course having a good rapport with students is necessary, but both sides must know the limits.
- **Believing that you are the answer person for the students, and believing that you should never admit that you don’t know the answer.** There is no way to know everything. Our job as educators is to show them how to discover answers, not spoon feed the answers to them.
- **Sitting behind a desk or podium and talking in a monotonous voice in a stationary position.** It is a fact that our minds will zone out in a stale and boring setting. Keep your lessons alive and real. Moving around and changing voice intonation is a tool that we should relish in classroom.

A lot to think about I know, but it’s good to check and evaluate ourselves from time to time. We want to make sure that we don’t fall into any of these *teaching-related-potholes*. One good way to check yourself is to have a trusted peer sit in one of your classes and give honest feedback. Another way might be to record your lecture from time to time, and critically review it. All in all, we know that being aware is half the battle.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Never Too Late To Bounce Back

We’ve all had those days when we say to ourselves: *I just don’t know how much longer I can go on like this?* But nowadays, it seems that teachers have to deal with more stress than ever

before –with things like discipline issues, parents, administration, quizzes, benchmark testing, and even professional jealousy. Often there are times when we feel that we’re facing these struggles alone. Chances are *stress* is taking its toll on us; or we may be approaching something worse—*burnout*.

These two *cousin-conditions* are such huge topics that we could discuss them here for days. But for now, let’s just take a brief look at the characteristics of the two of them, and see if any sound familiar.

Stress--

- is characterized by over-engagement.
- can cause our emotions to overreact.
- produces urgency and hyperactivity.
- causes loss of energy.
- may lead to anxiety disorders.
- can damage us physically, and may kill us prematurely.

Burnout--

- is characterized by disengagement.
- can cause our emotions to be dulled.
- produces helplessness and hopelessness.
- causes loss of motivation, ideas, and hope.
- leads to detachment and depression.
- can damage us emotionally, even to the point that life may seem not worth living.

The good news is that recognizing the signs of these unwanted visitors are a very important step. However, failing to recognize such demons can lead to lasting damage in one’s life, family and career. Likewise, watching our friends, family or colleagues suffer in such damaging states can be as equally unsettling. Fortunately, it’s never too late to start on the road to recovery. As they say,

prevention is the best medicine, so here are a few things that we can do to prevent stress and burnout.

- Start the day with relaxing techniques, like yoga or reading some positive materials.
- Adopt healthy eating, exercising, and sleeping habits.
- Nourish yours and other's creativeness. Creativity kills stress.
- Support others in times of need. Help to build community and morale with your colleagues.
- Plan a better work and life balance. Teachers can get involved outside of the school and encourage wellness and fitness.
- Provide back-up and support. If someone needs your help, be there for them!
- Help create a positive, supportive climate at work.

Teacher should band together and support one another, thus ensuring that this amazing career remains a sustainable one for all of us. Work together. Stay aware. And remember, it's *never* too late to bounce back.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Summer Recharge**

Have you noticed that summer is just around the corner? Before you know it, all of these hard-working schooldays will be behind you; time will be yours to immensely enjoy. So, have you decided what you are going do for all of those free hours? Here are some great summer break ideas that you can start thinking about now.

- Sleep, sleep, and then sleep some more. Maybe even slumber for 24 hours straight! Undoubtedly, this is #1 on everybody's list.
- Read as much as you can. Catch up on those books you've been dying to get your hands on, but just couldn't find the time for.

- Do some gardening or yoga. Summer is a great time to get in shape or to try something new. For instance, doing some volunteer work or perhaps take some classes, like karate or art.
- Go on a field trip with family or friends. This can also be a great opportunity to pick up some teaching props for your classes next year.
- Watch some funny videos on YouTube--an incredible resource for side-splitting entertainment.
- Do some major cleaning of your house or office. Prepare you school supplies for next year. Organize, label and alphabetize everything! A clear space means a clear mind.
- Connect with other teachers from all over the world using social media like Facebook and Pinterest, or discover teacher-oriented websites and blogs. Association with other educators is vital for needed support and updated knowledge.
- Take some time to study up on some teen-lingo. Watch wrestling, soccer, or some current action movies. This will help you to converse with kids better.
- Create something outstanding and memorable for your school or students. Let your creative juices flow during your summer healing.

And most importantly, don't forget to reflect on your previous academic year. Teaching is an art and a skill; it takes practice. Therefore, summer allows us a superb opportunity to regroup our thoughts and tweak our teaching strategies. A personal diary or class log is a remarkable way to track successful classes, failed techniques and issues that may arise during the year.

Rest and relaxation is a must for every teacher. We need the down-time to recharge ourselves and mentally prepare for our next challenging year. Summer break—a blessing to us all—yet a shame if left barren.

# Teacher Talk

## BOOK 2

A COLLECTION OF MAGAZINE ARTICLES  
FOR TEACHERS



WRITTEN BY  
**MARSHA MARIE**

### Education Liability

**Education Liability**.....what a mouthful!! As head of the English Department in a Dubai K-12 school--with 2000 students, I was bombarded on a daily basis with issues concerning education, teachers, and discipline. I had meeting after meeting with teachers, students, parents and educational gurus--all having their own concepts of what education is, and whose responsibility is it to administer it. And yet, the lack of responsibility that society itself takes when it comes to academic liability still astonishing to me today.

There are two main issues that really concern and provoke me the most. First of all, too many adults act--and even openly admit--that they have no goals in their lives—personally, professionally or academically. How can this be? If an individual doesn't know where they're headed in life, who else does know?

I think that it's safe to say, that most of us felt that education was something that was supposed to *happen* to us when we were in school. We waited for some mystical power to come and put the knowledge into our heads, with our without any effort on our part; and then leaving school (or university) finalizes the end of the learning process. Let's face it, when you're a child, you think as a child. However, as adults, we have come to know different. Unfortunately, too many people still do not understand that no matter what stage we are in life--whether married, or already established in our career--**we should never stop learning**. It is *our* responsibility to keep the learning process alive within us. The rule of our physical mind is: *use it, or lose it*. We shouldn't let a day go by that we are not striving to better ourselves somehow; for example, learning a new skill or another language.

Unfortunately, what's even more disheartening is that more and more of the younger generation today is going through our educational systems with what seems to be steadily declining concern for guidance, ambitions and goals. It seems as they are high-speed racing cars spinning around a race track, without any prize at the finish line. There is no beginning, and

there seems to be no ending in sight. They are in auto-drive, simply going through a process, just running the laps as fast as they can in order to achieve passing marks, and nothing more. But, what will be of their future? Who will guide them to set goals? What has happened to education liability?

My dream in this imperfect world is to implore the parents and the teachers--whom have the lives of these precious young people in their hands--to look at their own personal role in this accountability equation. Parents and teachers alike must share in this task and show the children of this country that young people need to put their energies more into academics, and less into video games and lazy idleness. They have been tricked into believing that a never-ending race around a make-believe track *is* the real world. Truth be told, if our children are not going forward academically, then obviously, they are going backwards; while the rest of the world is pushing ahead.

We cannot keep telling our children that they can make it in the universities in the highly-developed countries around the world, without properly preparing them. I am shocked when students approach me and tell me that they are heading to London for university, and yet they cannot write a simple letter in a proper English format. Most likely, such students will suffer in the end. We--parents, administrators and teachers--must help them overcome these academic weaknesses.

Moreover, parents and educators alike should continue their own educational development in order to make *themselves* more capable of passing this *baton of academic goals* to the children of our communities. The good news is, that it is never too late to start. Start today and invest the time and effort in yourselves and your children! Start a library in your home. Teach your children the love of reading at the earliest age possible. Instead of video games and Internet chatting, make education and studies the most important thing in their world. Children need our guidance! Work as much as you can with your school's officials to bring about the best in your child's today, and their future.

### Reflecting Yesteryears

Our learning experiences from our childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood can have a tremendous impact on the way that we teach today. Not only can these learning experiences show us what to do as teachers, but they can also show us what *not* to do; particularly when considering the different aspects of teaching, such as, conducting assessments on student achievement, our teaching style and delivery, or even our student rapport.

Have you ever thought to yourself: *Am I a product of my learning experiences?* The answer is most likely, yes. Let's think about it for a minute. Do you remember the first time you got up and spoke in front of the class in your high school, or those times you had to read out loud to the class and your stomach went into a frizzy? Do you remember receiving a low mark on something you really worked hard on and never understanding why? Do you remember how your teachers made you feel in class, or how they handled your endless questions?

All of these experiences during our educational past directly affect who we are as teachers today. Let me share a good example with you. My third grade class was doing a Show-and-Tell activity, and I chose to present our puppies that were just born at my home. I remember that the kids went crazy and I received an impressive A-grade. But now when I think about it, I wonder why I received that mark. Was it the fact that the puppies were so cute, or was it that I was an extra-talented third-grade presenter? *Odds are the mark was for the puppies.* Consequently, I now wonder how it made the other students feel when they received lower marks. This whole *cute puppy experience* of mine taught me what *not* to do with my students today. For instance, I carefully consider what I am assessing during student presentations or writing assignments. I make sure to give them a clear rubric—detailing exactly what I am looking for and how they will earn their marks. No secrets, no surprises!

On the other hand, my schooling history had some good points too—several wonderful math teachers. Because I was a terror in learning math, I had to move along in very small steps. My teachers took the extra time needed for me, and never got angry or frustrated. For this reason, I learnt the true meaning of patience. They were the finest examples of what I *should* do in the classroom while teaching grammar and pronunciation to my students today.

All in all, teachers these days are likely better trained than before; even so, it can be very enlightening to reflect what we have learned from our classrooms-passed, thus helping us to discover what shaped us to be the mentors we are today.

### **Education is Worth the Trip**

One of my favorite memories of school field trips was the day my first-grade class went to the Phoenix Zoo in Arizona. *Ah yes! It was just like yesterday.* I strutted around the zoo with my brown-bag-lunch in hand and quarters in my pocket—I was a miniature queen. It was an incredible day filled with a train ride and a lot of different animals. But, it was the event just after lunchtime that I remember the most.

While walking amongst the playful deer, I decided to pull out some chocolate-chip cookies. Instantly, I was pounced-on by a baby deer, which seemed to be the size of a semi-truck. I ran for my life! It didn't take long for me to figure out that the deer was after my chocolate-chip treasures. So, like Jack-be-Nimble, I sprinted toward my teacher and slipped the cookies into her open purse and fled. It was only a split-second later that the deer rammed itself head-first right into the teacher's bag. She let out a piercing screech; and the kiddy-crowd went wild! Bambi had turned into a wild hunter. What an exciting day at the zoo for a bunch of five-year-olds!

As you see, field trips are exhilarating part of childhood memories. Of course any teacher who has ever monitored a school outing will vouch that field trips are a lot of work and responsibility. But the benefits of a jaunt outside the classroom are well supported.

For instance, school-supported outings:

- **Develop stewardship, awareness, and brings the community together:** Trips to parks or national monuments can help children to develop a sense of belonging to the city or country. They can also introduce special emphasis on different concerns. For example, climate change, social issues or pollution.
- **Reach adults through children:** Children take back their experiences and share with their families; this in-turn helps spread information and new ideas.
- **Lend legitimacy and credibility:** Of course outings to the zoo and wild life preserve are great fun, but through field trips children can learn the underlying purpose of these very establishments.
- **Reinforce classroom instruction in a way that is not available for the teacher:** Only so much can be done in the classroom; but a trip to see how the giraffe eats or how a snake slithers is something only the five senses can appreciate. In so many cases, outings can mesh beautifully with school curricula and lessons.
- **Unite learning with peers with special experiences:** Children learning with others in their own age group, or level, are particularly beneficial. Plus nothing can replace the memories of experiencing real places, and real things.

Remember the saying: *I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand.*

### I'm Not Board at All

Of all the items in my classroom, I think that the whiteboard has got to be the most essential item that I use. I cannot image my room without it! It plays a role of some sort in nearly every lesson I teach. *An incredible invention indeed!* But have you ever thought about the history of classroom boards? I did, so after some snooping around on the Internet I was able to visualize and understand a bit more of its historical legacy.

**THE BLACKBOARD:** The blackboard, or chalkboard, is said to have been invented by a high school Headmaster, named James Pillans, possibly around the very late 1700s. Although the exact date that Pillans began using the blackboard is still a mystery. It is known, that he used it to teach geography. *Smart guy!*

Blackboards have remarkably enabled teachers to share ideas with large amounts of students at one time, as opposed to a single student at a time. There is no doubt as to why it became a revolutionary item. The only drawback is that some teachers and children are allergic to the chalk that is used to write on it. Likewise, this same chalk dust causes havoc with computers, thus a cleaner solution was needed. *Welcome in the whiteboard!*

**THE WHITEBOARD:** Although the whiteboard, or erase-board, first appeared in the market in the 1960s, its acceptance and evolution was a bit slow. It didn't become an educational hot item until the 1990s. Granted the whiteboard's true origin is debatable, but no one can dispute its worth in today's classrooms. It is easier to clean, and the uses vary only as much as the teachers imagination! But wait, there's more! The board just got smarter! Now let's welcome the Smart Board.

**THE SMART BOARD:** The SMART Board was introduced by Smart Technologies in 1991, giving us the perfect blend of *computer and board*. This innovative tool is an interactive

board that allows the user to maneuver around a software application by simply touching the projected image on a big screen.

Needless to say, as all technologies have advanced, so has the means of education. For example, online students have reached a remarkably high number, and as a result, this online-necessity has brought us the Blackboard Learning System.

**BLACKBOARD INC-** Around 1997, Blackboard Inc. supplied us with a virtual classroom management system that is easy-to-use and allows online teachers to communicate and assess their students more efficiently.

One thing's for sure, anywhere around the world, online or in a classroom, the board plays a vital role in teachers' lives. An incredible history for an incredible tool!

### Little Blue Dictionary

I present you a tale of a discovered treasure! My story begins when my two small children and I left the States to begin a new life in Pakistan. My dear mother helped me pack to ensure that nothing necessary got left behind. As we packed, I asked my mother if I could take along her paperback dictionary. A strange request indeed, but my mother was more than happy to give her permission. I tucked it away safely in my bag. *Why did I just do that!?*

A month went by, and I became bored out of my skull living on the farm; after all, the only thing to do was to look at the family cow! One day, feeling desperate for something to do, I went rummaging around in my luggage hoping to find something—anything! Suddenly I ran upon my mother's dictionary. An idea struck me. *I could READ the dictionary!* So, I sat outside in yard and opened it up. That was the mystical moment for me! Reading that little blue dictionary became an obsession; I couldn't get enough. I spent hours upon hours reading and analyzing words that I had never seen before. Each page was a captivating adventure for me.

To this day, my love affair with dictionaries continued, beckoning me to know more of their history. Did you know that the first dictionary is credited to the Akkadian Empire? Tablets were discovered in Ebla (modern Syria) and dated roughly 2300 BCE. These historic tablets were written in cuneiform and contained Sumerian—Akkadian wordlists. Interestingly enough, it wasn't until 1604, that the first purely English alphabetical dictionary titled, *Table Alphabeticall*, was created by Robert Cawdrey, an English teacher.

(And, have you ever wondered why British spellings are so different from American spellings? Well, we have Mr. Noah Webster to thank for that.)

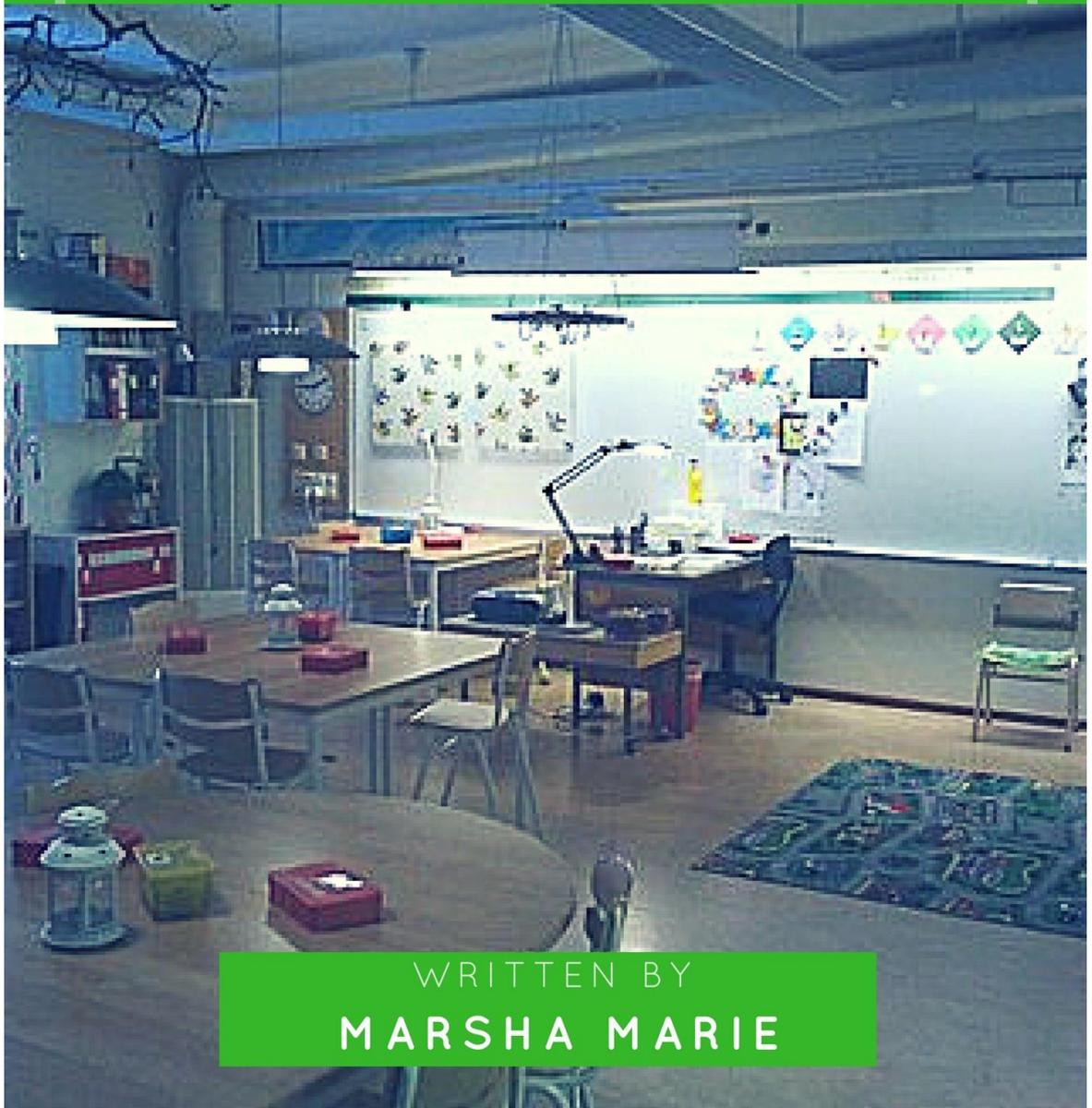
Twenty-five years has passed since my mother gave me that little blue book—a cherished treasure that travels with me from place to place. The pages are yellowed and frayed. The binding taped over and over in attempt to keep it composed. Occasionally, I take my tattered treasure into the class so my students can see first-hand the token of my favorite little love story.

*Woe is me!* If only we could help today's generation to fall in love with words, as I did that day with my little blue dictionary.

# Teacher Talk

## BOOK 3

A COLLECTION OF MAGAZINE ARTICLES  
FOR TEACHERS



WRITTEN BY  
**MARSHA MARIE**

**Dear Teacher**

Let's imagine getting a letter from a student that goes something like this.

*Dear Teacher,*

*Things aren't always that easy for me to say. I try to get my feelings out, but too often they just won't manifest the way I want. I know that school is good for me, and it's preparing me for my future; I get that point. But, what about now—my present? Lately, I have been wondering why you never ask me how I feel, or want. I mean, is following the schedule and curriculum all that school is really about? Well, if you were to ask me today what I need, this is what I would say to you.*

*First of all, I would like you to greet me each and every day I come into the classroom. Smile and say hi! When the week has finished, tell me to have a nice weekend. I know you say it to others, but why not me? But most importantly, when we're in class, pay more attention to me—notice me! Take the time to speak to me directly and personally; even if it is for just a few moments. Bottom line, I really want know that you care about me as an individual, and that I'm not just a small drop in your sea of students.*

*Another important thing that I really need from you is for you to take the time to imagine things with me—help me dream! Remind me what I can do in life, and what I can be in life! Then once I have dreamt, show me how to achieve those dreams, and trust me enough to know that I will accept your guidance.*

*Do this by challenging and engaging me more in class. Show me how to handle the challenges that you give me, and allow me the time to think and reflect about them. I need that time to let things soak in. And don't forget, at the same time, keep me pumped-up and interested. Oh yea, and whatever you do, don't let me get away with low standard work—demand more of me!*

*One final note: give me the freedom to ask questions of you; even if my questions or comments are off-topic from time-to-time. I need to share with you how I feel and what I am thinking.*

*Thanks for listening.*

*Anonymous Student*

### **It's All in the Writing**

All too many times while teaching I noticed that boys act quite differently than girls. For example, one of my anecdotes that would work well in an all-girl class might flop miserably in an all-boy class. Why such different reactions? Fortunately, researching more on the subject has enlightened me—boys and girls are simply wired differently, therefore, they learn differently.

Schoolboys bring incredible energy into the classroom. Using this liveliness is a great opportunity for teachers, but we must understand how to do this. For example, boys accomplish schoolwork much better with clear bullet-point instructions, timeframes to work within, and problem-based learning involving decisions or choices. Likewise, segmented tasks in the classroom are a great benefit for our young men --as they have a tendency to be better focused. However, in order to keep them interested in reading assignments, we should surround them with material that they will enjoy reading or we run the risk of them zoning out.

A very important fact to remember is that boys generally have weaker hearing than girls, so, if a boy seems to be disinterested suddenly, it may be simply because he cannot hear you. And finally, remember that boys need to be boys! They *love* having time for just pure boy-loudness. Whether, it's clapping loudly, tapping on the desks, or just a special time scheduled in their day to free-talk in class, it is great way to utilize some of their energy!

On the flip side of things, girls bring a certain spice to the classroom, with an added tendency to want to please the teacher. Luckily, teachers can obtain incredible results by channeling this quality during lessons and discussions. Although schoolgirls generally need more thoroughly explained instructions than boys, they do quite well with project-based learning. And thus can absorb new information better when they are able to make a connection with the real world. Likewise, schoolgirls do great with circle discussions, because each girl feels they can be heard and respected; *Think-Pair-Share activities* can be equally beneficial. However, be careful when using separate work stations, because, as opposed to boys, girls have a tendency to become stressed when given time limits, so let them move about the stations more freely.

A few final points, because these little ladies naturally have keener hearing, keep noise distraction to a minimum, and always allow them be creative with assignments--they love it.

Naturally, these are only a few differences, but they really influence learning styles, school performance and behavior; so understanding these types of psychological differences between boys and girls are just as important as understanding the various learning types themselves.

### ***Tot-Teachers***

As a parent and a teacher, it seems that I'm continually teaching *something* to somebody. However, lately I have been reflecting on lessons that my own children have taught me through the years. Here are a few of those invaluable lessons that these *tot*-teachers have passed on to me.

- **Money is not the key to happiness.** Happiness can be in hopscotch, a balloon, or even a paper football. Joy can be found in playing with friends, or swinging on a swing set. There's no need to go to far-away-places; delight can be found right in our own back yards.
- **Don't be afraid to ask why.** Too often we accept things without asking why. But asking *why* can present us the means to a deeper understanding, and personal growth. We ask *why* by reading, taking classes, or researching. Although, we may have to ask more than once to get a satisfactory answer, it's often worth it.
- **The world is an amazing place.** If you don't think so, then you're not taking the time to look around you. Up, down, and all around; children are amazed at every little detail they see. They marvel at colors, shapes and textures, and are constantly intrigued with how things work.
- **Seize the moment.** Children are spontaneous. They scream when they are frustrated, and cry when they are sad. They are genuine and free-spirited. True, as adults, we have boundaries to uphold, but we can learn to be more open with our true feelings.
- **You can be whoever, whenever you want to be.** Children are masters at improvisation. Their dreams come to life. They are dancers, artists, singers, or even monsters whenever want to be. No pressure, no *judgment*, just pure enjoyment.
- **Weird and wonderful is beautiful.** Just watch a child color. They generate vivacious combinations of objects and colors, and they love it.
- **Relationships don't need to be that complicated.** Children fight and make-up so quickly. But just as kids, we say things we don't mean in the heat of the moment. In that case, a time-out might just be the thing we need.
- **Being too serious ruins all the fun.** In today's stressful world, we need to learn to let-go once in a while. It's okay to laugh and play. It starts with a simple smile.

Lessons come from all aspects of life. I think that sometimes we get so preoccupied with adulthood, that we lose that image and reality of what it was like to be a child. Children of all ages are amazing teachers, too. Embrace your inner-child today.

### I Can Tweet, But Can I Search?

Some time ago, my students persuaded me to start ‘tweeting’ online. At first I was hesitant, but now I have to admit, I am enjoying the interaction with them outside the classroom. It is quite apparent that digital literacy has jumped into the mainstream of education with full force.

Digital literacy can be defined as one having the skills to effectively and critically use, evaluate, and create information using a range of digital technology; for example, being able to use a computer, laptop, tablet, or cell phone.

Without a doubt, kids today are digital wizards. But we should ask ourselves: Are they really *search savvy*? Most likely, if we were to give our students a topic to research, they would quickly jump to the net and ask *Sir Google* for the information; then they would probably take the first piece of information that comes up on the screen. What they don’t understand is that the items are most likely listed in the order of popularity, and are *not always the most reliable*. Thus, being able to critically search is an important aspect that needs to be developed.

Following are the levels to teach in order to guide our students to be more search savvy:

1. First, begin with critical thinking and language skills. Narrowing their focus to a more specific idea, and then selecting key words or synonyms that will help them to search out a given topic.

2. Next, show them how to utilize the diverse search tools that various search engines offer. For instance, searching by images, news, reading level or dictionary. Some add that the Boolean tools are useful to know. Here are some search engines that are very kid-friendly and would be great fun to practice on
  - a. Kids Click
  - b. Yahoo Kids
  - c. Fact Monster
  - d. Quintura Kids
  - e. Ask.com
  
3. Finally, demonstrate how to critically sort through the results. Take the time to teach about credible resources, scholastic-based resources, and valid resources. Some critical questions to ask when deciding if the information is credible is:
  - a. Who is responsible for the website? Is it from a trust-worthy organization?
  - b. Who is the author of the information? Does the author have any credentials or experience?
  - c. When was the information written? Is it current and still relevant?
  - d. Are the sources cited? Or is it just someone's opinion?

Love it or hate it, the digital generation is here. Let's teach our kids to use it with critical thinking.

### Calling All Writers

November is approaching fast, and soon the inspired writers of the non-profit organization National Novel Writing Month (known as NaMoWriMo) will unite with fiery to punch out the tall tales that burn within. Come each November 1, aspiring writers from around the world take to

their keyboards and feverishly attempt to write a 50,000-word novel in just 30 days. If the novelist is successful, they are awarded an official certificate and badge from the NaMoWriMo organization. But, if they don't make the mark, no harm done. You see, the fun part of this yearly event is the process of writing, and the personal satisfaction of fulfilling one's goal.

Amazingly, what started with just 21 NaMoWriMo writers (in 1999), has now skyrocketed to a booming 256,618 participants last year alone; all of them with a burning desire, and a tale to tell. Tell me, do you have a story that is just dying to get out? Here is what to do:

1. Go to [www.NaNoWriMo.org](http://www.NaNoWriMo.org). Create an account and fill in the details of you and your upcoming novel.
2. Start outlining and planning your story, but refrain from any writing! You will get the chance soon enough.
3. On November 1, begin writing! *No real plot? No problem!* Just let your creative juices flow and keep typing. You will watch your own epic unfold before your eyes. Remember that your goal is to write 50,000 words by midnight November 30. Pace yourself and have a mini-goal each day (e.g. 1700 words per day).
4. At the end of the 30-day deadline, upload your novel for official verification. And that's it—you will be a novelist!

Besides all of this, an amazing part about NaMoWriMo, is the work that they are inspiring around the globe with young writers. This year, the Young Writer's Program (YWP) will support nearly 2000 classrooms and 60,000 inspired independent kid-novelist worldwide. What an incredible inspiration to all of us! What is more, the YWP website is *loaded* with resources for teachers, such as curricula, workbooks and even a classroom kit—for teaching NaNoWriMo in schools, libraries, and community centers. So this year, get those kids writing!

# Teacher Talk

## BOOK 4

A COLLECTION OF MAGAZINE ARTICLES  
FOR TEACHERS



WRITTEN BY  
**MARSHA MARIE**

### Lesson Plan Particulars

For any teacher, regardless the subject, lesson plans can either be life-saving, a tedious obligation, or a teacher’s nightmare. Ask any ten teachers about this hot topic and you will get ten very different opinions and emotions.

What is a **lesson plan** (LP)? Simply put, a lesson plan is a form of communication to the teacher. It shows:

- What skills or ideas the students will learn in a particular lesson
- How students will learn that skill or idea
- How the teacher will know for sure that the students have learned that skill or idea

Designing fun and productive lessons is a talent that all teachers should master, but as anything else in life, it can take some time to master. The good news is, the more we do it, the better we become at it. Some may ask: *Why do lesson plans at all?* Well, the importance of lesson planning is clearly undeniable. Let’s examine what a well thought-out lesson plan entails.

- It provides an organized and structured roadmap to where the lesson should go.
- It serves as a secure footing and shows that the teacher is organized and mindful of students’ needs.
- It offers evidence of what has been taught in previous classes and helps the teacher to keep in sync with the curriculum.
- It’s a reliable way to share teaching ideas; allowing colleagues insight into a variety of teaching methods.

Although lesson plan designs undoubtedly vary from subject to subject, studies show that a well-balanced LP will consist of the following characteristics:

- **Content:** The subject-matter of the lesson. It could be a concept or skill.
- **Prerequisites:** What the student should know about the topic ahead of time.

- **Instructional Objective:** The exact outcome that you want from the lesson.
- **Materials and Equipment:** A list of everything that will be used in order to deliver the lesson successfully.
- **Assessment:** The method in which you will clearly understand if your students have effectively reached your objective.
- **Follow-up Activities:** Activities or materials that will be used for reinforcement of the lesson.
- **Self-Assessment:** To be completed after you have delivered the lesson; a self-reflection of how the lesson went and any adjustments that would be necessary for improvement. (This is probably the most neglected of all the aspects in lesson planning.)

Now of course, depending on your school or institution, the amount of details required on your lesson plans will differ. I have experienced a drastic variance between organizations I have worked for in the past. *So, when in Rome, do as the Romans do!*

### Spice it Up!

Sometimes things can get a bit monotonous in a classroom. Students sit in the same places, and the teacher uses the same old teaching method, day after day. *BORING!* Well, with a little bit of courage and spunk, any teacher can shake things up. All it takes is doing something just a wee-bit out of the ordinary.

Here are a few fun ideas that can spark some excitement, and brighten any school day.

- **Bring in an unusual plant:** A healthy green plant can make any classroom a warmer learning environment. The more *unusual* the plant, the more entertaining it can be.

- **Play some music during class:** Try playing soft symphony music during a writing assignment or a silent reading period. You may be quite surprised with the reaction you get from your students.
- **Use a hand puppet as a teacher’s assistant:** Have some fun and teach an entire lesson with your new puppet-assistant. Be sure to give it some personality, like a name, some hair and maybe a high pitch voice. Tell the students that any questions that day must be directed to your new assistant. You can even give your new assistant a desk and some paperwork to do. The more *you* act it out, the more the kids will play along.
- **Change your routine:** Do something different. *Anything* different. For example, you could change the side of the room in which you teach, or wear some mirrored-sunglasses during the lesson, or even change your name and make the students use the new name. The possibilities are endless.
- **Surprise them with some treats:**
  - **Fruit-in-the-bottom yogurt cups:** Put some fruit in the bottom of a small cup, with a healthy topping of yogurt mixed with low-sugar jam on it. Kids will love them.
  - **Oranges and dates:** Slice some oranges, or clementines, and serve with pieces of cut-up dates. It has some sugar, but it is completely natural.
  - **Plates of seasonal unusual fruits:** Bring in trays of some unusual fruits like lychees, rambutans, or finger bananas. You will need to give the students a bit of instructions on how to open them, but it will fun.

(Keep in mind that peanuts should never be used, as peanut allergies are *very* serious!!)

Prevent boredom by doing something unforgettable every day, no matter how small it may seem. Let your creativity and spirit shine; your students will have more fun, and you will too.

### **Wanna Play?**

From the very first moments of life, playing becomes the most dominant characteristic in every child's world. But, do we really understand that 'play' is an essential part of positive human development? It seems these days, with such issues as stress-related-illnesses and child-obesity plaguing our society that we have somehow lost the understanding of the benefits of playtime, and how it manifests in our lives.

While playing, children of all ages develop skills that they cannot get anywhere else. Even babies discover the very building blocks of reality while playing. As it turns out, some of our lives' most important lessons are discovered and cemented through play. For example, things like learning mutual respect for others, friendship, cooperation, and competition.

I'm sure we can all agree that every child needs special time each day to have fun and burn off energy. But did you know that studies have revealed, children actually perform better in school when they are allowed regular playtimes, or recess? It turns out that, when students are provided with regularly-scheduled recreation that they ultimately interact better with teachers, other students, and academics.

*Play* has been described as a time when life is at its best. Honestly, who of us doesn't smile when we think of our childhood playmates? Alas, something happens between childhood and adulthood. Responsibilities become greater, and we adults get too caught up in life, and forget to play. If we could only understand that, like kids, we can actually perform better when we take the time to relax and engage in some type of recreational activities. Recreation alleviates boredom and depression, releases tension and prevents aggression. Play also facilitates creativity, flexibility, and learning. It can teach us perseverance, and even heal emotional wounds.

It's common knowledge that children learn by example. Therefore, when we adults create a union of play, work and love in their lives, we set an incredible example for our children. You can start today; here are only a few of myriad recreational things that you can do.

- Play tag with your children
- Play board games
- Laugh with friends
- Play drawing games
- Have hobbies
- Do some gardening
- Take up photography
- Keep a saltwater aquarium
- Do puzzles
- Paint
- Play a musical instrument
- Do some writing

Oh, did I just say writing? No wonder, I feel so good today!

### **Mesmerize with Music**

I looked over at my lonely violin and thought. *I wonder how my students would like it if I played my violin during class.* Instantly a snicker emerged as I told myself, “Oh, I am sure your screeching would not be the greatest thing to write an essay to.” True indeed, but did you know that music can be a very useful tool in class management?

It's a common fact that classroom management is the most difficult skill to master; and it touches every aspect of the learning and teaching process. Too often it is only thought of as *keeping control* during a lesson. But by definition, classroom management is so much more than that. It really embraces all the things that we as teachers do to organize our students, space, time and materials, in such a manner that instruction and learning can take place. So then, maybe my violin is not such a bad idea after all!

Let's look at some of the fascinating facts about music in the classroom. Music can be used in any class, regardless of grade level or subject matter. Extended research shows that some of the direct benefits of its use in classroom settings include an increase in creativity, concentration, and even speech abilities. Likewise, there were notable improvements in reading comprehension and math scores. Making use of melody can also temporarily heighten spatial awareness and intelligence.

What's more interesting is that, certain types of music have been known to stimulate particular areas of the brain, which produce biochemical changes, therefore producing a calming effect on students. *We all want that don't we?* No doubt that the reduction of disciplinary problems and better student engagement makes using music in the classroom clearly an effective strategy. But, be careful! Different styles of music produce different outcomes, so choosing the right melody is a must.

I suppose you're probably wondering if I ever played the violin in my class. Well, after reading extensively on the *Mozart Effect*, I decided to experiment a bit with it. So, one day during a writing assignment, I piped in some Mozart violin concerto without any warning. The tune suddenly started like a *viola-sonic boom*. I reached over to lower the volume and was surprised when one of the students quickly jerked to stop me. "Let it play," she insisted. "I like it!"

## Yes, We Khan!

*‘A free world-class education for everyone everywhere.’* This is the mission statement of Khan Academy, a non-profit organization in California, USA. Currently, the Khan Academy ([www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org)) has over 11,000 free tutorial videos that can be watched anytime, anywhere. This extraordinary website receives over 7 million visitors a month; growing at a phenomenal rate. Their English video library includes subjects such as: math, history, art history, biology, chemistry, physics, computer science and more. Most of the lessons average about 10-minutes-long, and are recorded by the founder himself, Salman Khan. His soothing and conversational voice makes this personable approach to teaching a joy to listen to. Lessons are translated into other main languages and are added each day.

It all started back in 2005 when Salman Khan (then about 28 years old) began tutoring online for some family members. However, working a full-time job as an analyst along with tutoring 15 relatives at the same time, proved to be tricky. Hence in 2006, at the suggestion of a close friend, Khan recorded a few of his videos for his family, and posted them on YouTube. Other viewers began watching and sharing the videos. Unsuspectingly, this simple idea seeded a potential *education revolution*.

Continuing with his new-found hobby, the number of Salman’s videos increased along with the number of his fans. The response from the public was so inspiring that in 2009 he felt compelled to quit his regular job and begin a non-profit organization in order to reach and empower as many people as he could. Khan Academy is now backed up by some of the most powerful names in America, such as, Bill Gates and Google.

Other teachers have embraced Salman’s inspiration. What was once being taught during class time is now being assigned as homework—utilizing Khan Academy as a resource. This allows the student to view and repeat the lecture as many times as needed. Afterwards, in class, the students work together on true problem solving activities. This new technique allows each pupil

to work at their own pace, while empowering teacher to focus on intervention where needed the most. Classroom flipping of this nature is now taking place in around 20,000 classrooms across America. News of this has spread like wildfire and teachers are fired up in staff rooms around the globe.

As a matter of fact, schools are not the only ones that are benefitting from these lectures. Adult learners are using them to refresh topics that may have faded with time. Likewise, GED students are utilizing Khan Academy to help move their education back on track. The ages of enrolled students vary from 8-68. These and other varieties of pupils no longer need to feel ashamed or embarrassed to ask for additional help—this being only one of the many blessings of this innovation.

Confidence; inspiration; innovation; helping others to fulfill their dreams? Salman Khan, our hats are off to you!

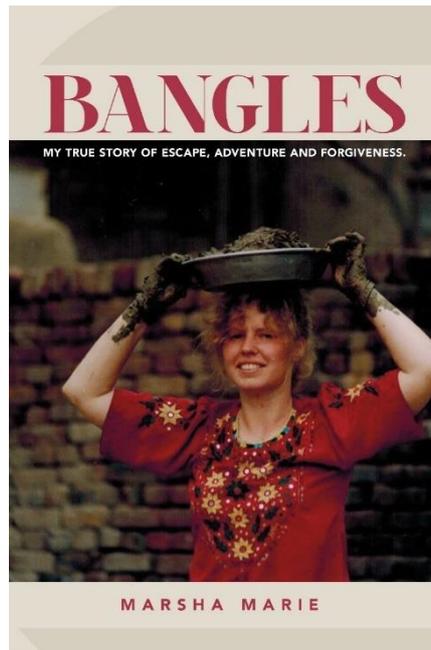
\*\*\*\*\*



Marsha 'Yasmine' Marie is an author, human rights activist, public speaker, radio personality, voice-over artist, blogger, vlogger and mom. She has also worked as an English department head, English instructor, American accent trainer, and communication lab designer. Marsha was born in Ohio, but then raised in Arizona; to escape and domestic abusive relationship, at 25, she moved to the Middle East---where she lived and taught for over 20 years.

She's now back in Arizona and lives with her children. She has joined forces with RAINN (Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network), the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and the Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence and is currently a member of various speaking bureaus to share her story. She is also working on her upcoming radio show, The Izz Wow Radio Show---a show focusing on her love for Middle Eastern music and women's' issues around the world.

Check out [www.MarshaMarie.com](http://www.MarshaMarie.com) for updates, information and upcoming titles.



## Bonus Chapter from *BANGLES*

### Chapter One: Surrender

by Marsha Marie

Twenty years of running ends today—March 1, 2014. As a result, I am sitting here on an international flight, wedged between my daughter and a young handsome Marine going home on his leave. I'm heading towards Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport to turn myself in.

The plane ride is long and tense. I've been chatting on and off since we left Dubai, trying to keep my mind busy. I can't believe I'm finally bringing this to an end. I've taken my head scarf off for the first time in years. I feel an unusual sense of freedom, but shyness at the same time.

Mona, now twenty-five, has been my greatest support and comfort. She calls Dubai her home and rejects the idea of returning to the States, most likely because she fears what lies ahead. Nevertheless, she stays positive.

"They are not going to take you," she says, reaffirming herself more than me. "You have to think positive, Mom."

“Okay, dear. I will,” I say with a slight tremor in my voice.

Walking down the long carpeted hallway of the terminal, I feel as if everyone around me knows who I am—knows of what I have done. But in reality, each of the passengers is in their own world, clambering to see who can get to the immigration counter first. The lines are lengthy, but just as well for me.

Wait! Is that my heart pounding? Can everyone hear it? I feel as if I am in Poe's “Tell-Tale Heart.” My booming chest will surely give me away.

I step up to the counter. This is it. The man asks for our passports, and I hand them over. I try to breathe, but I feel as if an elephant is sitting on my chest; it's just too heavy to bear. “Breathe, Marsha! Damn it,” I scream to myself. “They'll know something's up!”

The immigration officer is wearing a typical black police uniform, safely tucked away in his little Pope-like glassed area. Tick, tick, tick on the keyboard. Each stroke—taking me closer to exposure. Will he discover in the system that I am wanted by FBI? Will he know that I have been eluding the authorities for the last twenty-two years?

Yes, he will. And he does. I see it in his eyes. I guess it's true; a criminal can always tell when they have been made.

He tries to make small talk with me about Dubai. But each stroke on the keyboard seems more urgent, more excited as he informs his colleagues on the other end of the intranet about me. I know on the inside that he is jumping up and down like a screaming little kid, “I have finally caught somebody! Come and get her!”

Suddenly, I see a large police officer standing to my right. “Can you go with this gentleman, ma'am?” the immigration officer says. Slowly and steadily we follow as I grasp Mona's hand. He leads us to a large deserted area in the terminal. About four other officers are huddled together, as if in a football game.

As I watch them discussing nausea sets in. After a minute or so, one of the four separates and comes towards us. “Ma'am. Are you aware that there are two arrest warrants out for you?” the

officer inquires.

“Yes, I do,” I say. “Can I get my attorney’s letter out of my bag? I can show you that I am surrendering myself—to clear all of this up.” I continue as I reach in my purse for the letter, “My son should be right outside waiting for me. Can I call him?”

“No! No calls,” one officer from the desk area quickly snaps back. The officer standing near me takes the letter and returns to his group.

Mona starts to tear up; the pressure is now too much. This has just gotten real for both of us. I grab her hand again and hold tight—a feeble move to calm a young autistic lady who hasn't been separated from her mother in the last twenty-two years.

“Everything will be okay, sweetie. Don't worry, I have this all planned out. I have to turn myself in. They will let me out in a couple of hours. This is all part of the process.”

“Marsha, we have just spoken to your son outside. He is waiting for his sister,” the officer informs me. “Please stand up. You are under arrest; we have to take you into custody.” Like clanging church bells in my ears, the finality of it all has hammered down. I embrace my daughter and try to calm her tears.

“Why are they taking you? You have done nothing wrong!” she bursts, unable to bear silence any longer.

I try to calm her. “Sweetie,” I say, “your brother is just outside the airport. This officer will take you to him. Okay? I will be fine. This is what I came back to do. I have to do this. For all of us.”

The officer leads my precious Mona away from me—out of the terminal and towards her awaiting brother. She is sobbing. My heart is breaking. My legs go numb, and I have to sit down. A woman officer comes towards me and asks me to stand back up, then handcuffs both hands behind my back. The clasps of the cuffs echo through the empty terminal. I am escorted to the awaiting police vehicle outside.

The cuffs are cold and hard, making it difficult for me to sit in the back cab of this small pick-up truck. The escorting officer bizarrely asks me about Dubai. “Yeah,” he says, “I've always thought

about going there.”

“Really?” I reply, almost reminiscent, with a touch of regret for having just left. “It really is an amazing place.”

My holding cell. Could this be any smaller? But still, nothing like I had imagined. The walls are made of cement block, with a cement shelf built into the back of it. The shelf is about two and a half feet off the ground. The entire room is painted a shade shy of daisy-yellow, and the door is oversized and metal. A woman officer un-cuffs me and asks if I would like a drink of water. “Yes. Please,” I barely utter. “This room is awfully small. Can you leave the door open for me? I’m extremely claustrophobic.” The woman very politely—and surprisingly—agrees. (You never know when you’ll get what you ask for.)

I sit on the hard cool shelf, like an obedient child who has just been given a time-out, and watch them as they cluster around the desk reading and discussing my profile on two different computer screens. I eventually get tired of trying to eavesdrop, and look to the floor to size up the room. “Six feet by four. Yuck! Please God, don't let them shut the door.” I pray this under my breath with all sincerity.

“Is it true?” I hear suddenly. I look up and see one of the officers is slightly leaning against the metal door frame, with his arms crossed. “Are you really surrendering yourself after running for twenty-two years?”

“Yes,” I say, without even a touch of pride.

“That took a lot of courage,” he replies. “Well, I think you're doing the right thing by turning yourself in. Don't worry. This will all be just a memory in the morning.”

After a while the woman officer returns to me. We are going to transfer you to the main city jail now. I will have to put the handcuffs on you again. I stand up and go along without any kind of hesitation. One of the male officers escorts me out to the transporting wagon, or paddy wagon as some call it. He opens the little cab area between the driver’s seat and the back cage. He guides

me in. It is cold and dark—almost black. The seats are hard plastic and my hands hurt pressing against them. I try to scoot over, but my long tight skirt is only complicating matters. I half lean over and my head rests on the side of the cab just behind the driver’s side; my feet are still behind the passenger’s side. I give up trying to move any further. The only light I can see is from the streetlights looking out the front windshield through the metal screen that separates me from the front. Suddenly, I feel true isolation for the first time in my life. Such intense loneliness I have never felt before. I begin to weep softly.

A few seconds later, I hear a voice coming from behind me. “Mom. Whadja do?” I’m a bit taken back. It’s a young male’s voice coming from sheer darkness. Not knowing if I am annoyed that someone is getting up in my business, or relieved to hear a human voice in my darkest moment, I barely give the effort to turn my head to see who is speaking to me.

Oh, what do I even say to THAT? I don’t reply but continue to sob.

He says, “Oh Mom, don’t worry. Everything’s gonna be okay. You’ll see the judge in the morning and you’ll get to go home. Morning will be here before you know it.” Then the voice goes silent again. A driver climbs in the front and we’re off. I peer out my screened opening to see if I can recognize Phoenix. I recognize nothing.

We arrive at the main city jail, or “the matrix,” as the streets call it. I continue through a rigorous and calloused check-in process, from one small holding cell to the next—all serving different functions: mouth swabbing, groping, finger-printing and of course the infamous mug shot. Like controlling cattle, the door opens to one of my holding cells. The officer calls my name and tells me to stand behind the podium for my picture to be taken—leaving me open for yet another opportunity of enquiry. “So-o,” the officer says, all drawn out. “I hear that you have been hiding out for over twenty years. Is that true?”

“I am not proud of what I have done,” I murmur.

With amazement in his voice and almost a chuckle, he says, “Well, you’re either really good, or we’re really bad?” It almost sounds like he wants me to answer the question, but then he quickly adds, pointing at the card taped below the camera, “Go ahead and look at this card right here.” Snap! “Turn.” Snap!

After the mug shot, the officer instructs me to go to the nurse’s station. This main function area is now co-ed. The female nurse sits behind a huge desk. She is wearing a typical white nurse’s uniform. She looks over at me and says, “I am going to ask you some questions and you just answer. Okay?” I shake my head, agreeing, another tear streaming down.

“Do you smoke?”

“No.”

“Do you use marijuana?”

“No.”

“Do you use heroine?”

“No.”

“Have you ever shared a needle with anyone?”

“No. Really, are all of these questions necessary?”

“I’m sorry, but I have to ask them.” She continues, “Have you ever been a prostitute?”

“No!”

“Have you... Have you... Have you...?” The questions keep coming.

“No...no...no....” I answer with mirroring rhythm.

Finally, the nurse says, “You know what? Looking down this list, I don’t think we need to continue. I can already tell what the answers are...”

Suddenly, just as she was ending the sentence, a mammoth of a man inside the holding cell directly behind me starts slamming his fists on the metal doors and screaming profanities at the

top of his lungs. I jump in surprise as fear strikes through me as lightening. I begin crying even harder—but now out of terror. The man keeps pounding and pounding on the door. Three officers bellow at him to calm down. He doesn't stop. The door flies open. They tackle the man and start tazing him.

My entire body is literally shaking by this point. “I don't belong here!” I sputter at the nurse, knowing very well she can't help me.

She leans in closer to me over the desk and says, “Do you want to know how to survive in here?”

I shake my head as if to say: yes.

“Just focus inward. Try to block out everything that is happening around you . Okay? You will make it through the night.” (Again, a voice of reason comes to me when I most need it). She continues, “It's nice seeing someone that really doesn't belong in here—if you know what I mean.”

I nod, wiping another tear away. “Thank you.”

I get up and walk to the next process station. I take a seat at the beginning of the long bench. As we are called, we move down to the right. In due time, I make it to the end of the bench. My tears have dried for now. A young boy seats himself next to me. I continue looking forward. Suddenly, I hear him say, “Are you okay, Mom?”

With instant recognition, I look up towards the boy. It's the same voice I heard in the dark hole. With a half-smile, I reply, “Yeah. Yeah. I'm okay.”

“Has anyone told you what will happen tonight?”

“No. No one.”

“Once you're done here, you'll go out into the hall in the next room. They'll search you again and then take you to another cell for the rest of the night. Then in the morning you'll see the judge, and then you'll get out. Don't worry. It'll go by fast.”

“Thanks. What’s your name?”

“Kevin.”

“Thanks, Kevin.”

Again they call my name and take me to the next hall just as Kevin had said. The beckoning officer politely instructs me. “Stand here, young lady. Remove your coat and shoes.”

A woman officer heads over with surgical gloves on.

Oh my God. What is she gonna do?

She stands directly in front of me and says, “Bend over at the waist and hang your arms straight down.”

I oblige without saying a word.

“I am sorry for doing this,” she says. She runs her fingers along the bottom-inside of each cup in my bra. She then grabs the middle area where the cups are joined, and shakes it to and fro. Then she says, “Now put your hands against the wall.” Another patting down.

Again? How many times are we gonna do this tonight?

“Alright, put your stuff back on and stand against that wall.” The officer then leads me down the hall into my next holding tank. It’s about 2 a.m., and there are about twenty-five women sprawled out like cats sleeping on the benches and the floor. The room has two phones on the wall to my right, and a u-shaped cement bench to the left. There is a toilet against the back wall and a green thirty gallon garbage can by the toilet. How odd. I find a narrow spot along the middle of the u-shaped bench and settle in—nothing to do but wait for my attorney to arrive.

As women often do, I carefully chose my wardrobe for the arrest. Unfortunately, I didn't consider that I might have to sleep on the floor of the city jail. I'm wearing my favorite long Turkish black skirt with a black turtleneck shirt, my bluish-purple power-blazer, black high-heels, and—to top it off just right—a multi-colored long mini-stone necklace. Maybe I over-thought it just a bit—

and by the looks of it, I am the only one who did. Some of the women have dirty jeans on, some shorts and tank tops. One lady even has her house slippers on. But the thing freaking me out the most is this young girl who's scratching and shaking. Forget her dirty clothes; she has scabs all over her body. What is wrong with her? I later found out that she was a Meth-addict. (This was my first encounter with someone who was on Meth. It was not pretty.)

The cement holding cell is chilly, with a dirty brown cement floor, and a pungent metallic smell. Suddenly, my claustrophobia kicks in. I find it harder and harder to breathe. My eyes begin dashing to and fro, looking for a passage for air. I lock onto the two-inch space under the steel door. I convince myself that the air coming from under the door is just for me. I can actually see it flowing towards me; it's invisible, but I can see it. "Okay, calm down. You can do this. Breathe... Breathe..." I say to myself, between each long gulp of air. I start to relax. My breathing stabilizes.

One of the girls gets up and uses the toilet. Oh my. Am I supposed to look the other way? After she finishes, she lies down in a different spot. I notice a depleted roll of toilet paper next to me. The other girls are using the rolls of paper as pillows. I had better take that and keep it with me for later. I slyly snatch the roll and press it flat, stuffing the roll into the left front facing of my blazer. Okay, now I'm ready just in case. (That stash of toilet paper came in very handy later that night, as the call of nature came to light in the most inappropriate way for public display. I tried to scrape up some self-respect by using the garbage can as a barrier. (Not one of my funner moments in life.)

Around 5 a.m., we are suddenly jarred alert by an officer at the door. He yells out that it is time to eat. Like a scene in a zombie movie, the women begin rising from the floor and take a spot on the bench. I wonder what they serve in jail. The officer leads a young man in an orange prisoner jumpsuit holding an open box with clear baggies spiking out the top; he couldn't be more than twenty-four years old. Without uttering a word, he walks around to each woman in the cell and offers them the three entrée items from the menu tonight: One small bottle of school cafeteria fruit juice, one hamburger bun, and one baggie with a few tablespoons of creamy peanut butter.

The two "waiters" leave the cell and the women begin devouring. I decide that it's best to ration. Who knows when my next meal will be? So I take a few bites of the bread, and suck some of the peanut butter for flavor. I savor it slowly, and then down it with a small swish of juice. Once the women have finished, they return to their spots on the floor and benches, and drift back off to sleep again. I sit silently in the same spot, thinking. Keeping my food supply near—and just

thinking.

Time crawls its way to morning. The sound of the keys rouse me. Finally. Maybe it's time to see the judge? They call out a list of names. Yes! Thank God! I wait anxiously for my next instruction. He tells us to line up against the wall outside in the hallway. With my peanut butter and juice bottle in tow, I accept my place in line and follow the lead. We walk slowly with no sudden movements into a small white room. Again they take my fingerprints. A lady officer looks at my food and says while pointing to a trash can, "You can't take that with you inside to see the judge. You need to dump it here."

There goes my food supply.

The officer leads us into the courtroom next door. It's cold, and much brighter compared to the holding block—mostly white floor and walls.

Hey, where's my lawyer? I look around and keep thinking that he will come into view at any minute, but he isn't. The proceedings begin anyway. A recorded male voice comes over the speaker: "You have a right to..." The words fade into the background. I whip my head to and fro. Where is my attorney? He is nowhere to be found.

A female judge, sitting on a circular brown platform, calls my name with authority. "Marsha Marcum." I walk to the marked spot as one does on a performance stage. "State your name and date of birth, please," the judge commands.

My voice crackles as I answer her.

The judge continues, and without any explanation announces, "Because of your record, you will remain in jail until your hearing."

What? My legs go numb. Oh my God! I'm going to jail? Where is my attorney? This was not supposed to happen like this.

Suddenly, I remember that my attorney had scheduled a quash warrant hearing for me. I finally muster the courage to speak to the judge. "But, Your Honor, I came to America for a quash hearing," I say with great desperation. "I thought my attorney would be here for me right now,

but he isn't, and I don't have his number with me. My purse went home with my children.”

“Okay. Let me look into it. Go back and sit down. The bench will call you up when I am ready.”

My mind is racing a thousand words a minute. I begin mumbling to myself, “I shouldn't have come back home. This was not supposed to happen like this. Where is my attorney? Oh God, what have I done?”

After what seems like hours, but in reality is only about thirty minutes, the judge calls me back to the bench again. “We looked into it, and yes, you do have a hearing set in a few days. I will go ahead and release you.”

Oh, thank God! “Thank you, ma'am,” I say.

I am transferred to one process room after another. Each room is getting smaller than the one before. I wait anxiously to be released. I am still trying to fathom what in the world happened with my attorney. Why didn't he show up? I replay it to myself over and over again. We had this planned out for well over a year.

The final process room has a phone in it. I try to call my son to let him know that I am being released. But I can't remember the bloody number. I think as hard as I can, but it's just not coming to me. Luckily, one of the other girls being released is calling her mother on the phone next to me. I ask her if her mother could go onto Facebook and let my son know what is happening—it's worth a shot, anyway. After twenty minutes, her mother has found him. “He is on his way,” she says.

Awesome!

At last, the final door of the matrix opens. I step outside with great anticipation, but nothing greets me except a light shower of rain. But I'm not sad. I'm back home. I made it to America. These cool refreshing drops are a welcome change from my former desert refuge. At last, appearing from around the corner, I see my son and daughter on American soil. We embrace. This is the first day of a lengthy legal battle, but my two children are here beside me, to love me, to support me and my past decisions.

“Son,” I anxiously ask, “where’s my attorney? Did you call him and tell him I was arrested at the airport?”

“Oh yeah...” he says, “I forgot.”

\*\*\*\*\*

## Books by Marsha Marie

[www.MarshaMarie.com](http://www.MarshaMarie.com)



- ***Rose-Colored Bangles: A Collection of Poems***, Indie Published, 2016. (Bangles Pre-Launch release.)
- ***Bangles: My True Story of Escape, Adventure and Forgiveness*** (Bangles Series, Book 1), Indie Published, 2016.
- ***Sandi’s Sweets Coloring Book Series***, Books 1 and 2, Indie Published, 2016. Not for Sale: For Domestic Violence Shelter’s only.
- ***Bangles to Mom: Letters from Pakistan***, (Bangles Series, Book 2) Indie Published, 2016
- ***Crowded Bangles: How I Should’ve Driven My Co-Wife Crazy***, Indie Published, 2016.
- ***The Gift: a mini-memoir***, Indie Published 2017
- ***Teacher Talk: A Collection of Magazine Articles for Teachers, Books 1-4***, Indie Published, 2017
- ***Dodged Bullet: A Night with a Lollywood Superstar***, Indie Published, 2017
- ***Legally Blonde in UAE: A Mini-Memoir***, Indie Published, 2017
- ***75 Things You Should Know About Working in a Call Center: A Fun Look at Life on the Phones***, Indie Published, 2017

**FREE DOWNLOAD**

*Another exciting addition  
to the*  
**BANGLES Series!**



*Get your free copy of the hilarious "Crowded Bangles" when you sign up to the author's VIP mailing list. Get started here:  
<http://marshamarie.wixsite.com/newslettersignup>*

★ ★ ★  
CROWDED BANGLES-  
FOR MATURE  
AUDIENCES ONLY