

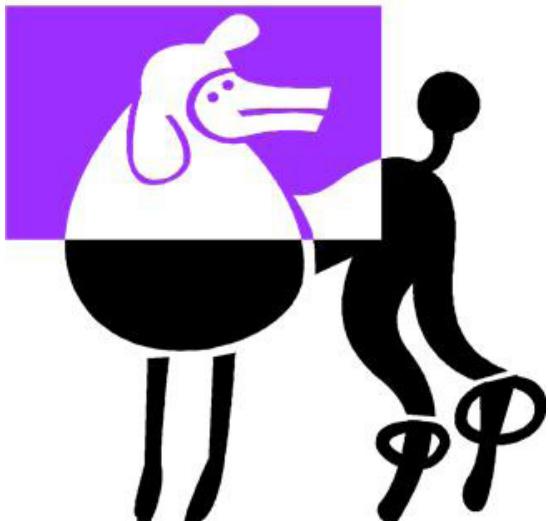
The  
Wow

# e-newsletter

by Ken and Dahlynn McKown

## Principles

Volume 8 No. 4 April 2012



## Adjectives and Charley

*By the very talented, beautiful and  
entertaining Dahlynn McKown*

I've never been the one to explain to others the finer points of grammar. That's the reason I keep in-house editor and grammarian Terri Elders around to help when someone asks me if "c" comes before "e" when there is an "i" in the word. Wait, that's a spelling rule, not a grammar rule. See, I told you I'm not good with grammar.

But, believe it or not, in this issue I'm going to explain how to use adjectives, with the help of John Steinbeck and his infamous sidekick, Charley the poodle. And, yes, Terri proofed this story to make sure I'm correct in my explanations. I do not want to lead the flock astray.

*Continued on page two*

### Not Your Mother's Book . . .



*A Collection of Stories from People Like You*  
Created by Ken McKown and Kathleen Baker

### *Have a dog story to share?*

"Woof!" That's what your dog would be saying to you right now if he or she knew that you had a chance to publish their story in this wonderful title! Make them famous by sharing their canine escapades with our readers! Submit your story for consideration at [www.PublishingSyndicate.com](http://www.PublishingSyndicate.com).

*Deadline: June 1, 2012*



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We want to hear from you!  
Contact Publishing Syndicate at  
[Writer@PublishingSyndicate.com](mailto:Writer@PublishingSyndicate.com)



## Adjectives and Charley

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I'm going to start with a formal explanation about adjectives. And since Publishing Syndicate does make a large annual donation to Wikipedia, I'm going to take advantage of that sponsorship to use a portion of an explanation from their site:

**"In grammar, an **adjective** is a 'describing' word; the main syntactic role of which is to qualify a noun or noun phrase, giving more information about the object signified.**

**"Adjectives are one of the traditional eight English parts of speech, though linguists today distinguish adjectives from words such as determiners that were formerly considered to be adjectives. In this paragraph, 'traditional' is an adjective, and in the preceding paragraph, 'main' and 'more' **are**.\***

Dahlynn

Terri

*Terri, can you end a sentence with the word "are"?*

*Sure...it's a form of the verb "to be." But it's clumsy writing here...I would have written "are adjectives, as well."*

*Wow. Someone made a mistake at Wiki. But I'm going to leave it in so I can use this as a valuable teaching moment.*

*You're pretty funny!*

**"An adjective acts as the head of an *adjectival phrase*. In the simplest case, an adjectival phrase consists solely of the adjective; more complex adjectival phrases may contain one or more adverbs modifying the adjective ('very strong'), or one or more complements (such as 'worth *several dollars*' or 'full of *toys*' or 'eager to *please*'). In English, attributive adjectival phrases that include complements typically follow their subject ('an evildoer *devoid of redeeming qualities*')."**

In a brown nutshell, interesting adjectives help clothe a naked noun. Quick! How many smartly-placed adjectives were used in the proceeding and extremely clever sentence? Two? Three? Okay, you get my not-so-subtle but very poignant point.

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## Adjectives and Charley

*Continued from page two*

But wait, I would be remiss if I didn't bring up comparative adjectives (used to compare two things) or superlative adjectives (used to compare three or more things). One favorite I use quite often is "best, bester and bestest." Another favorite is "smart, smarter and super smart." Wait until Terri proofs this...she's going to change the last example to "smart, smarter and smart ass!"

Now to revisit Mr. Steinbeck. John Steinbeck, winner of both Nobel and Pulitzer Prizes, has a wonderful way of describing people, places and things. This includes his use of adjectives. In his 1962 classic memoir, *Travels with Charley: In Search of America*, Steinbeck memorializes his trip throughout the United States in his custom-made truck/camper (named Rocinante, for Don Quixote's horse), with his standard poodle Charley riding shotgun.

I read this book many years ago, but recently, on a road trip to Portland, Ken and I listened to the audio version

of the book. We loved the words Steinbeck chose to describe every nuance of life on the road. But what caught my ear were the numerous references Steinbeck used to explain Charley's pee stops. That's right, pee. His turn-of-phrase—another way to describe something, just like an adjective—is legendary. Here are a few examples to set the tone for the rest of the article:

"anointing of an area"

"did his tour of duty"

"gave him a limited promenade"

"smell over the register of previous guests"

"called it a day"

"clear his head"

"he steamed as he went"

"drifts toward the objective"

"settled down to business"

"collaborated with a sapling"



*Rocinante, exhibited at the National Steinbeck Center, in Salinas, CA ([www.Steinbeck.org](http://www.Steinbeck.org))*

(c) Ken McKown

*Continue on page four*

## Adjectives and Charley

*Continued from page three*

“Steinbeck doesn’t clutter his prose with meaningless or unnecessary adjectives,” explained Terri in her note back to me upon proofing this article. Here are some examples of Steinbeck’s non-cluttering of adjectives: “Charley is a born diplomat...he knows a little poodle-English...Charley is a mind-reading dog...Charley is a tall dog...Charley, wet and shivering...he is a gallant dog...his fur was balled and dirty...Charley is only a little less sinful than I am....”

My favorite part of the book is when the two reached the California redwoods. Steinbeck writes that Charley “was a tree expert of enormous background” and he couldn’t understand why his old dog wasn’t more excited by the 300-foot-tall trees surrounding them. Steinbeck then realizes that Charley won’t look up, but focuses only on what is in front of him. Pulling a sapling out of the ground, Steinbeck plants it in front of a huge redwood and tricks Charley into peeing on it to satisfy his personal frustration of the canine not reveling in emptying his bladder on the majestic redwood. Thus, the aforementioned reference to Charley collaborating with a sapling. In recounting the incident, Steinbeck writes, “I am convinced that basically dogs think humans are nuts.”

Are we? Maybe, especially when it comes to describing things. The sentence would have been bestest if Steinbeck had used “round” in front of the word “nuts.” Yes, I am a smart ass (one adjective).

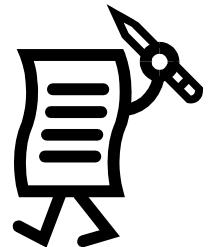


Check out these links that include listings of thousands of adjectives:

- ..... [www.momswhothink.com/reading/list-of-adjectives.html#Adjectives List](http://www.momswhothink.com/reading/list-of-adjectives.html#Adjectives List)
- ..... [www.enchantedlearning.com/wordlist/adjectives.shtml](http://www.enchantedlearning.com/wordlist/adjectives.shtml)
- ..... <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/adjectives.htm>



*Ken checks out a redwood at Prairie Creek State Park in California.*

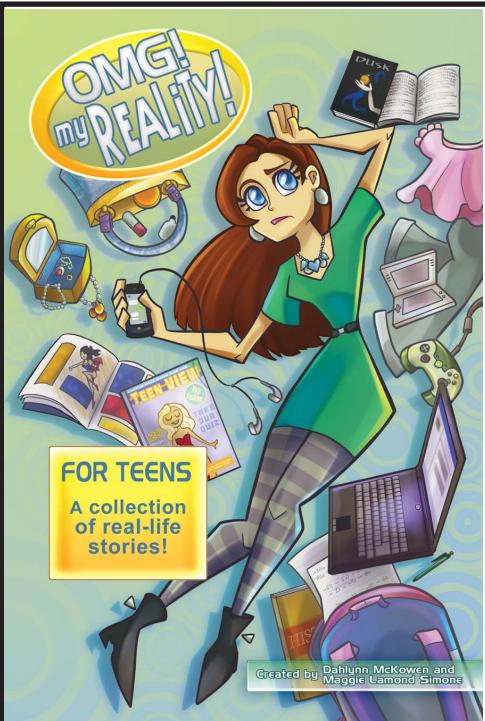


# The Wow Principles e-newsletter

## What's Coming Up Next Month?

Next month, prolific WP guest columnist Terri Elders will regale us with her article “Avoiding Adverbial Ataxia.” What are adverbs, you ask? No idea. Here’s an example she sent along for the tease:

“Are adverbs adversaries?” I asked, questioningly.  
“Sometimes,” Tom argued, ambivalently.



### NEW COVER!

Our *OMG! My Reality For Teens* cover was created by Allison Carmichael. Allison also illustrated our *My Story is Out* cover (page 8). If you need a great artist who meets deadlines and is very easy to work with, Allison is for you!  
AllisonACarm@gmail.com.

# *OMG! My Reality!*

An Anthology for Kids, Pre-teens and Teens

Our *OMG! My Reality!* anthology series is the counterpart to our mature audience *Not Your Mother's Book* anthology.

For *OMG!*, stories must be written by individuals 25 years old and younger. If you have children or young people in your life who like to write, please encourage them to submit their real-life stories. Besides receiving compensation (info below), should their story be published, they can list this major accomplishment on college applications and job resumes.

**Teachers:** nothing is more important to us than having the youth of the world read and write. If you, or a teacher you know, feel the same way, please pass this information along. Again, we need stories from all age groups for three books: Kids, Pre-teens and Teens.

Submission guidelines can be found on the Publishing Syndicate website, under the *OMG! My Reality!* tab. Some particulars to note include 1) word count must be between 500 and 1,200 words, neither more nor less, 2) we are not accepting

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# The Wow Principles e-newsletter

*Continued from page five*

poetry at this time, and 3) the stories do not need to be perfectly written—if the story premise is good, the title's co-creator will mentor the contributor in making his/her story stronger.

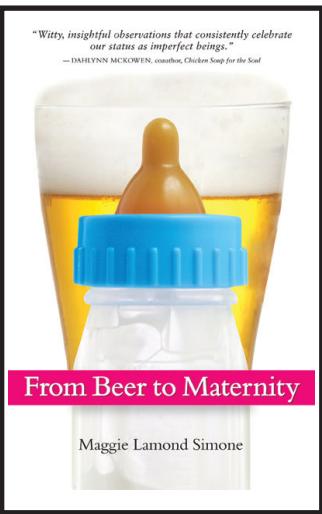
Compensation: each contributor will receive: one (1) copy of the book; a T-shirt featuring the *OMG! My Reality!* logo and the wording “I’m a published author!” and a share of the book royalties. For one year following publication, the contributor will collect a small percent of the royalties paid to the co-creators. Split among 60-plus contributors, the amount will likely not total more than \$50-\$100 per contributor. It could be more; it could be less.

**EXTRA HELP**, please! Our other anthology—*My Story is Out: High School Years*—needs about 20 more stories. This anthology is for, and **written, by straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals 25 years old and younger**. Please pass this information along to any LGBT teen writers you may know, or any teen interested in penning a real-life story for this book. The compensation is the same. Story guidelines can also be found at Publishing Syndicate.

## Meet *OMG! My Reality! For Teens* Co-creator Maggie Lamond Simone!

Maggie Lamond Simone is a national award-winning columnist and author. Her book *From Beer to Maternity* (2009) was a 2010 USA Book News Finalist in the humor category, and her first e-book—*POSTED!*—was released in July 2011. Maggie’s essays are in the book *P.S. What I Didn’t Say* (2009) and multiple *Chicken Soup for*

*the Soul* titles, as well as in *Cosmopolitan Magazine* and *Notebook Magazine* (Australia). She is also a blogger for *The Huffington Post*. A mother of two up-and-coming teenagers—both of who trump essentially everything else in her life at this point—Maggie is also a professor of journalism and public speaking at State University of New York at Oswego, in Oswego, New York.

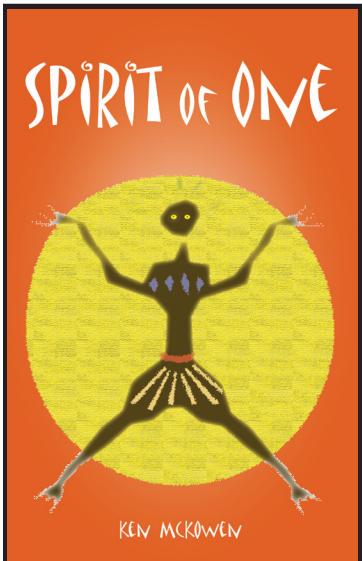


To learn more about Maggie, visit [www.MaggieLamondSimone.com](http://www.MaggieLamondSimone.com). Her home page is very entertaining; I giggle every time I read it!

-- Dahlynn

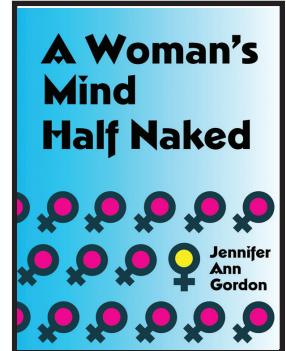


## Publishing Syndicate Books!



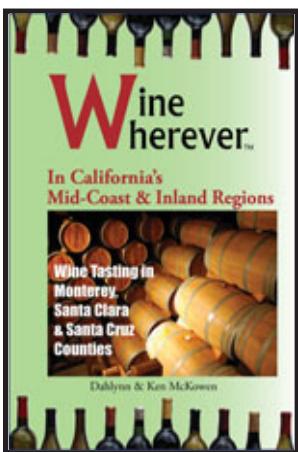
**Spirit of One:** Visit the world of wishtongues, wizards and lowly villagefellows as an unlikely hero leads them in their struggle for freedom.

Available as a \$2.99 e-book through Smashwords or as a print book from most online retailers including Amazon.com. Author: Ken McKowen



**A Woman's Mind Half Naked:** Jennifer Ann Gordon is the author of this delightfully funny book for women. This book is for multi-faceted women with multi-dimensional lives. Inspiration. Hilarity. Love. Wisdom. Tenderness. Compassion. Gratitude. FUN! FUN! FUN!

Available at Amazon.com: e-book (only 99 cents!), print book (\$9.95).

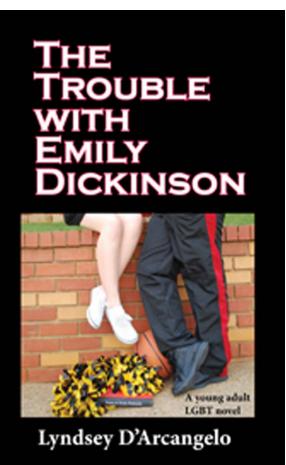


**Wine Wherever: In California's Mid-Coast & Inland Regions**, by Dahlynn and Ken McKowen, is a wine lover's best friend. It's a look into the reasons and history of why and how some 60 different winery owners jumped into this crazy, fun business. The book is for anyone who loves visiting wineries and tasting wine in Monterey, Santa Cruz and Santa Clara counties.

Found on Amazon.com for \$15.99, or e-mail Ken and he'll sell the book to you--signed by the authors--for \$10 plus free shipping and handling! What a great deal! (Ken@PublishingSyndicate.com)

Publishing Syndicate is proud to announce the release of a young adult LGBT book: ***The Trouble with Emily Dickinson***. Authored by Lyndsey D'Arcangelo, who is also the creator of the *My Story is Out* anthology currently under production (see page 6), this book is the first in a series of books targeted at the growing LGBT market. *The Education of Queenie McBride* will be the next book in the series and is scheduled for release in August 2012.

Download *The Trouble with Emily Dickinson* for **free** at Smashwords! The secret code to use at checkout is **XL22D**. Enjoy!



# The Wow Principles e-newsletter

## STORIES NEEDED!

Updated 4/27/12

### Not Your Mother's Book ...



New covers!

### Not Your Mother's Book ...



A Collection of Stories from People Like You  
Created by Dahlynn McKown and Patricia Nelson

## Not Your Mother's Book & OMG! My Reality!

Submit your stories for **two anthology series: Not Your Mother's Book and OMG! My Reality!** Nearly 40 NYMB titles are listed, along with details about each book. And there are three titles for *OMG!*: Kids, Pre-teens and Teens.

### Not Your Mother's Book ...



A Collection of Stories from People Like You  
by Dahlynn McKown

### Not Your Mother's Book ...



A Collection of Stories from People Like You  
Created by Dahlynn McKown and Terri Elders

### APPROACHING DEADLINES

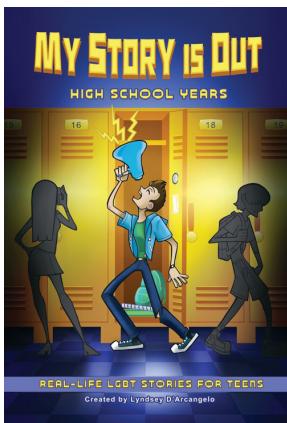
*On Being a Woman*: June 1, 2012

*On Dogs*: June 1, 2012

*On Holidays*: July 1, 2012

*On Travel*: August 1, 2012

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



## My Story is Out: High School

*The nation's newest anthology series  
for the LGBT community!*

Created by Lyndsey D'Arcangelo

Attention LGBT teens and college-aged kids! Lyndsey needs stories for her book, so please pass along this information. Contributors who make the book will be paid royalties! [www.MyStoryIsOut.com](http://www.MyStoryIsOut.com).

## Dream of Things<sup>SM</sup>

*Dream of Things* has a great line-up of anthology books. On their website, be sure to click on the "Workshop" tab for a listing of titles. Good luck!

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

*Go for it! Get published!*