

# **Language Inventor**

**Engage students with meaningful  
and relevant conversations about  
reading and writing**

*Every book, every volume you see here, has a soul. The soul of the person who wrote it and of those who read it and lived and dreamed with it. Every time a book changes hands, every time someone runs his eyes down its pages, its spirit grows and strengthens.*

Carlos Ruiz Zafon, ***The Shadow of the Wind***

# Writing makes...

- sorrow endurable,
- evil intelligible,
  - justice desirable, and
  - love possible.

Roger Rosenblatt, *Kayak Morning*



On the post-it note, write one sentence that describes this picture. Try to include as much information about what you see as you can in **one sentence**.

Richard Ohmann, professor at Wesleyan University, placed a cartoon, much like this cartoon, in front of 25 people and asked them to write a one-sentence description.

None of the 25 sentences were identical.

Then Professor Ohmann used a computer to determine how many grammatically correct sentences in English could be formed using only the words written down by these 25 people.

How many would you guess?

1000?



1,000,000?

Professor Ohmann's computer  
created ...

19.8 **BILLION** sentences.

**That's a lot.**

It would take

**40 human lifetimes**

to read each of those sentences  
aloud.

Other computer studies have shown that it would take **ten trillion years...**

-- **2000** X the estimated age of the earth –

to speak all the possible sentences in the English language that use at least 20 words.

*Therefore...*

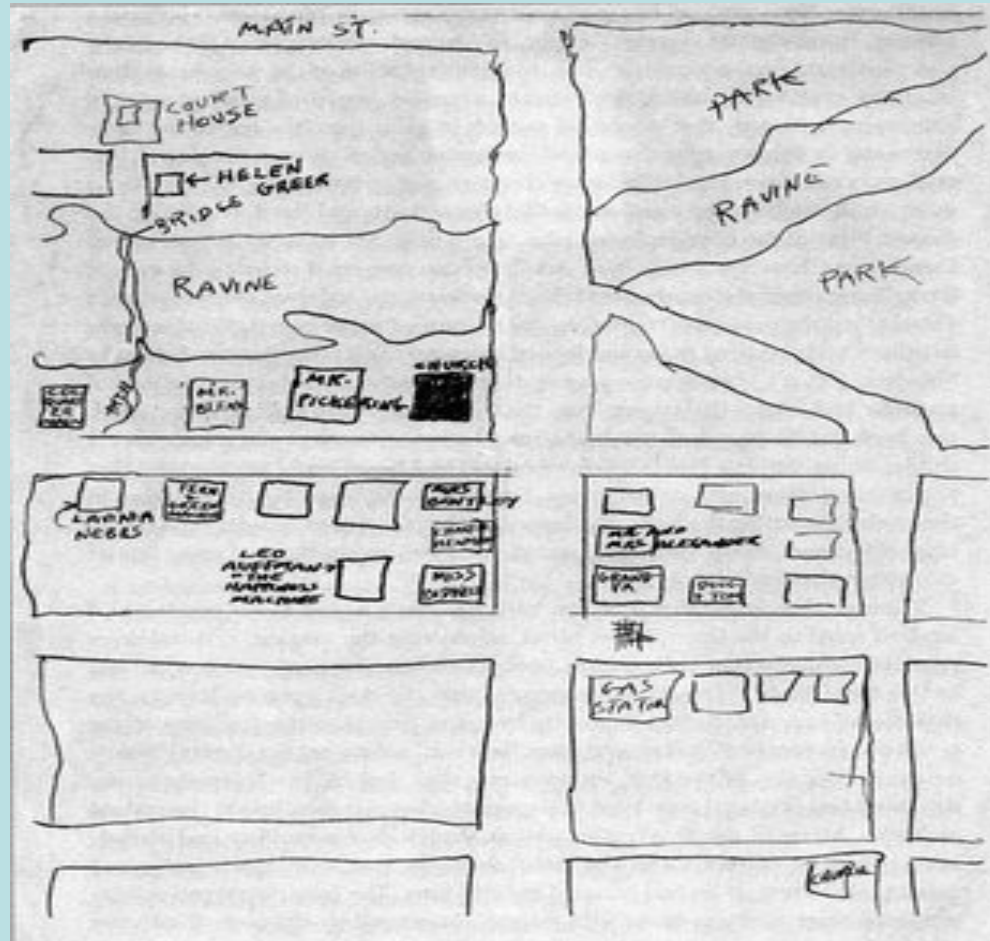
it is highly unlikely

- that any **20-word sentence**
- that **you will create** in this class
- has **ever been written or spoken in human history.**

**Language** plays a key role in the shaping and refining of **your identity**

- how you see yourself
- and how others see you.

# Neighborhood Map





# The Three Foundations for Your Success This Year:

- **You are a language inventor.**
- **You are an expert of inquiry.**
- **You are an accomplished storyteller.**

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