

Inspired by Carly Patterson's song, *Here I Am*, and the [Here You Are](#) narrative lesson at WritingFix, these two sixth graders wrote about experiences that shaped who they are. Be prepared to discuss where these writers excelled with their idea development and organization skills. Compare these two writers' use of writing skills.



### Here I Am

by David, a Nevada sixth grader

Here I am, looking down a slope that seems to be going straight down, dotted with moguls the entire way. I thought to myself, "How am I supposed to get down?" I was skiing with my friend and his dad, and I didn't want them to think I was a

coward, but when the dad said, "Let's go," I got really scared. I had already started to worry when I came up to the run and saw how steep it was. I also worried that I couldn't really see any path down. "Are there any rocks? What about trees?"

When I thought I'd found a decent path, I started down slowly, guarding against any rocks that I still couldn't see. I thought that my friend and his dad were behind me, but I was so focused looking downward that I couldn't really tell where they were. When I got down the first section, I stopped and looked back up the mountain. It didn't look as bad as I had originally thought, and I felt good that I hadn't fallen or ruined my skis on rocks. At that point, I saw my friend and his dad, and I waited for them. I could tell that my friend was having some difficulty. He definitely was skiing slower, and he took wider turns, and he paused at the ends of the turns. I felt better. I had worried that they would be waiting for me---not the other way around. With renewed confidence, I started skiing again, my friend near me now. I skied faster and freer.

Right at the bottom where the hill flattened out, I made a wide turn and hooked my tips. I turned backwards to the hill, and when I tried to get my skis downhill again, I caught an edge and toppled over. My friend skied up to me and asked if I was okay. I said that I was, got back up, and finished the run.

Here I am now, knowing that I can get down any kind of ski run, that I'm capable of doing anything that I choose.



### Here I Am

by Carmen, a Nevada sixth grader

"Code Red, Code Red!" The tense voice of my principal through the school intercom froze all the activity in my classroom.

I began to breathe heavily, and I could hear the panting of the boy next to me. I dropped to the floor and grabbed onto the leg of the table as I crawled under it. My heartbeat echoed in my ears, and the sweat on my hands made me clench even harder onto the table leg. I squeezed my eyes shut.

After a short while, which seemed like eternity to me, I opened my eyes and I saw a shadow of a man linger by our window. My eyes locked on the shadow, and at that moment, I thought that I was going to die young. Would I ever see my parents again? Every nudge and twitch made by the kids in my class caused our teacher to give us the evil eye.

Finally, the shadow looked like it was swept away by the wind. I looked around and started to stand. No one moved, so I sat back down. I waited a few more minutes again and stood up. Still no one had moved, so down I went. Finally, Mrs. Rowe, our principal, announced over the intercom, "The grounds are clear." I got to my feet, but still I held onto the table. My teacher announced, "Okay, boys and girls, let's get back to work." Her matter-of-fact voice calmed me, and I started drawing again.

Now, here I am, twelve years old, and I'm recalling the incident that happened way back in kindergarten. For me, it was just pure luck that I escaped unhurt. Every day, I'm waiting for my next brush with death.

Inspired by Carly Patterson's song, *Here I Am*, and the [Here You Are](#) narrative lesson at WritingFix, these two sixth graders wrote about experiences that shaped who they are. Be prepared to discuss where these writers excelled with their idea development and organization skills. Compare these two writers' use of writing skills.



### Here I Am

by Lexi, sixth grader

My name is Lexi, and I'm twelve. I'm the sister, the daughter, and the smart one. I'm an all around good student, but every-one has strengths and weaknesses. My strength is reading, and my weakness is science.

I put others before me, but I'm here for a reason, and I'm not going to get caught up with myself. Everybody has a fear, but apparently mine was caused by losing my original family early; my parents divorced when I was seven years old.

I guess I wouldn't be the person I am without my Mom and cousin Renee. They have helped me a lot, especially my Mom. I have overcome a lot of things, but the most important one was finding the good in my dad.

When I was ten years old, my dad signed me up for a basketball team. When it was the second to last game of the season, I was unstoppable. There were five seconds left in the game, and I had the ball, about to score the winning goal. Just when I was about to shoot, one of my opponents kicked me. Then, it seemed as if the entire team was kicking and slapping me. When I heard the buzzer, the game ended. I stormed out of the gym, my insides roaring with fire. My dad caught up to me in the hallway and ordered me to go shake the opposing team's hands. I didn't move. Suddenly, he grabbed my wrist with one hand and the front of my shirt with the other and he pushed me against the wall. Neither of us said a word. When he let go of me, I ran back to the car and started crying. I told myself that I really hated him.

After a couple of days passed, I realized that, well, he is my father, and he loves me. I also realized that I don't hate him. I just hate how he does things. After that night, we continued to fight a lot, but then I realized that the best way to handle him was to just ignore it. Otherwise, it seemed that whenever we talked, we ended up in a fight.

My life is *not* depressing. I have a lot of fun. I play softball; it's my favorite thing to do outside of school. I'm even on a traveling team. I love playing with my dog, Buster. One time, I started running, and he grabbed my shorts and pulled them down; I laughed so hard I almost cried.

Not many people know this about me, but I'm more emotional than anybody would think. I think that I've been through more than the average kid has. My brothers know nothing about how I really feel. Somehow, I've managed to keep calm in front of others, but I worry about how long I can keep up this front.

Here I am, now, afraid of tomorrow---the unknown. But I have gone from drowning in water to flying high in the sky, and I believe that things happen for a reason and that my God is preparing me for something special.



### Here I Am

by Kira, sixth grader

I stared up at the seemingly never ending rope. "I have to climb that thing?" I thought nervously. I could hear my heart thumping hard and fast in my chest. Although I knew it was impossible, I wondered if other people could hear it. I sure could. I knew that.

"Pssst! Kira, you're next," the person next to me whispered.

"NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!" I screamed inside my head. I swallowed hard, and my hands started to get sweaty. My heart was pounding louder in my ears, and I started to feel sick.

"Kira. You're up!" my teacher called.

"O-okay..." I stammered. Hesitantly, I stumbled over to the rope. I touched it, and then loosely held it in my hands. I glanced over at my parents. My mom was covering her eyes, which didn't make me any more confident, but my dad smiled at me. My teacher gave me an encouraging smile too. I took a deep breath, gripped the rope as tightly as I could with my slippery hands, and started to climb up slowly. I kept my eyes locked firmly onto the golden bell two stories above me. "Don't you dare look down. Don't look down. Don't look down. Don't look down..." I repeated to myself in my head over and over. If there were any other sounds in the room, I couldn't hear them over my own heartbeat. Maybe it was silent; I couldn't tell.

Nearing the top, I started to climb a little quicker. I knew I was almost there. I reached out with my arm and just barely grabbed the string that hung from the bell, and I swung it back and forth, making the bell ring very loudly. *DING! DING! DING!* I smiled to myself. Then a thought struck my mind. "Oh, my gosh... This means I'm two stories up." Instinctively, I looked down, and I immediately wished I hadn't. I stopped breathing. Everyone, practically, looked like ants. I closed my eyes and turned my head away from the downward view. I reopened my eyes and looked up at the bell again. I locked my gaze onto it, and slowly edged my way down. I slid, inch by inch, staring only at the bell, until I reached the ground.

"Great job, Kira!" my coach praised.

I smiled. I took a step back and looked up at the rope. "It doesn't seem that high any more..."

Here I am, now, having launched myself over the edge and landed safely down below, slowly making my way forward, ready to jump over the next obstacle.

Inspired by Carly Patterson's song, *Here I Am*, and the [Here You Are](#) narrative lesson at WritingFix, this sixth grader wrote about an experience that shaped who he now is. Read it carefully. Be prepared to discuss where this writer has already done well with his idea development and organization skills. But where might this writer add more, or create a more specific detail for the reader to think about?



## Here I Am

by Ryan, a Nevada sixth grader

Here I am, and welcome to my life and how it feels to be living in my shoes. My name is Ryan, and I am twelve years old. When I was one, my short life took a tragic turn. I was diagnosed with Type One Diabetes.

As I grew older, when my friends asked to play some games, I feared that my diabetes would go out of control. I never trusted my abilities. I always felt down about myself. My dad, sensing my problems, signed me up for baseball. That experience made me realize that my diabetes wasn't so bad. I began to climb on top of the world. My parents have always encouraged me to do more.

Now, here I am at twelve, loving to draw with my friend Sal, building forts, and playing football. You know, there is a saying, "The sky's the limit, but there are footprints on the moon." So, I hope that saying works for a cure for diabetes too. Here I am loving life and living it to the fullest.