

## *Tell the Story They Don't Want You to Tell*

Have you ever had a still, small voice inside whisper that you might want to be a poet or an artist or a writer or a musician?

*If so, you're not alone...*

*And, you're in the right place.*

We're students coming together on this site to meet kindred spirits, to share our work and to tell stories of history, by gathering that history and writing about it, singing about it and, maybe, discovering a talent we may not have known we had.

This is a website about history, not necessarily history in the history books, but history found in your communities -- in the very places that you live -- and this is a chance for you to save those stories before they're six feet under and gone forever.

*And that's important.*

If you want to write a poem or a song or fiction and you feel that you're pretty much alone, this is the place you'll discover that you're not alone.

We're offering schools every opportunity to be involved, but some cannot. There's pressure on some schools by some elected officials to not teach Black history or African-American Studies.

*We're not teaching history...*

*We're letting you teach history to each other by finding stories in your community, stories of people who were involved in a struggle for justice and then making a podcast of that story or writing about it or making a song about it – and sharing it on our site.*

To get a good idea of what we're talking about, go to podcast submissions and listen to the story of Reverend H.K. Matthews, produced by students at T.R. Miller High School in Brewton, Alabama. That's a story they found. That's a story they helped tell, and that's a story you can learn about and write about.

***The Principal at T.R. Miller High School high gave those students full support to tell that story.***

But some principals cannot. You can't blame them. They can't lose their jobs over this. But remember, no matter what your school does or does not do, you have a right to learn the truth of history. And if your school is not allowed to teach the truth of history, because of those elected officials, then you can teach each other because you can...

***Tell the story those politicians don't want you to tell...***

I mean it. Tell the story that they don't want you to tell, and put your story right here on our site, which is your site.

Last time I checked, you still have Freedom of Speech, and nobody can take that away from you. Nobody.

***So do it.***

We have teachers on our site ready to help you do it;

***Ashley Jones***, Alabama School of Fine Arts and Alabama's first African American Poet Laureate teaches how to write poetry.

***T.J. Beitelman***, Chair of the Creative Writing program at Alabama School of Fine Arts teaches how to write fiction.

***Marlin Barton***, who has published three novels and three books of short stories, teaches how to write fiction.

***Sarah Lee Langdon*** teaches how to write songs about history.

***Julia Brock***, History Department at the University of Alabama, teaches students how to use their phone to gather oral history from their own communities, make a podcast of that history and share it with the world on our website.

Send your work to [TheStoryAcorn.Submissions@gmail.com](mailto:TheStoryAcorn.Submissions@gmail.com).

We'll post it to our site. Then get ready to meet kindred spirits, to share your work with them and to be part of a new Friday Night Lights -- Alabama's "Friday Night Lights" for our future artists, writers, musicians and historians.

***If you're not sure where to begin, just pick up a pen and write one true sentence.***

***Something deep down inside will tell you what to do next.***

And remember the words of the novelist Graham Greene when he said: *In every young life, a door opens that lets the future in.*

Maybe, just maybe, The Story Acorn might be that door for you.