

James A. Michener

Quotes

*Writing, Men, People, Thinking, Book, Ocean, Jobs, Years, Children, Religious,
World, Dream, War, America, Heart, Inspirational, Believe, Sports, Country,
Texas*

I love writing. I love the swirl and swing of words as they tangle with human emotions.

~James A. Michener

Character consists of what you do on the third and fourth tries.

~James A. Michener

Don't put off for tomorrow what you can do today because if you enjoy it today, you can do it again tomorrow.

~James A. Michener

The really great writers are people like Emily Brontë who sit in a room and write out of their limited experience and unlimited imagination.

~James A. Michener

Scientists dream about doing great things. Engineers do them.

~James A. Michener

I have never thought of myself as a good writer. Anyone who wants reassurance of that should read one of my first drafts. But I'm one of the world's great rewriters.

~James A. Michener

I'm not a very good writer, but I'm an excellent rewriter.

~James A. Michener

If you reject the food, ignore the customs, fear the religion and avoid the people, you might better stay home.

~James A. Michener

If your book doesn't keep you up nights when you are writing it, it won't keep anyone up nights reading it.

~James A. Michener

An age is called Dark not because the light fails to shine, but because people refuse to see it.

~James A. Michener

The permanent temptation of life is to confuse dreams with reality. The permanent defeat of life comes when dreams are surrendered to reality.

~James A. Michener

A nation becomes what its young people read in their youth. Its ideals are fashioned then, its goals strongly determined.

~James A. Michener

You have to be eligible for luck to strike, and I think that's a matter of education and preparation, and character and all the other solid attributes that sometimes people laugh at.

~James A. Michener

We are never prepared for what we expect.

~James A. Michener

If a man happens to find himself, he has a mansion which he can inhabit with dignity all the days of his life.

~James A. Michener

America is a nation with many flaws, but hopes so vast that only the cowardly would refuse to acknowledge them.

~James A. Michener

A poet sees things in two ways: First, as a child who never saw it before, and Second, as a dying man who will never see it again.

~James A. Michener

The job of a storyteller is to tell stories, and I have concentrated on that

obligation.

~James A. Michener

Rampaging horsemen can conquer; only the city can civilize.

~James A. Michener

All I can do is play the game the way the cards fall.

~James A. Michener

a soldier lives always for the next battle, because he knows that before it arrives impossible changes can occur in his favor.

~James A. Michener

There are no insoluble problems. Only time-consuming ones.

~James A. Michener

No idea is ever dead until those who believe in it say it's dead.

~James A. Michener

I was a Navy officer writing about Navy problems and I simply stole this lovely Army nurse and popped her into a Navy uniform, where she has done very well for herself.

~James A. Michener

Writers turn dreams into print.

~James A. Michener

I was brought up in the great tradition of the late nineteenth century: that a writer never complains, never explains and never disdains.

~James A. Michener

The arrogance of the artist is a very profound thing, and it fortifies you.

~James A. Michener

Russia, France, Germany and China. They revere their writers. America is still a frontier country that almost shudders at the idea of creative expression.

~James A. Michener

Many people who want to be writers don't really want to be writers. They want to have been writers. They wish they had a book in print.

~James A. Michener

It takes courage to know when you ought to be afraid.

~James A. Michener

The extreme geniality of San Francisco's economic, intellectual and political climate makes it the most varied and challenging city in the United States.

~James A. Michener

Creative geniuses are a slap-happy lot. Treat Them with respect.

~James A. Michener

...when men ignite in their hearts a religious fury, they inflict at the same time a blindness on their eyes.

~James A. Michener

The sense of belonging is one of the great gifts men get in battle.

~James A. Michener

As a younger man I wrote for eight years without ever earning a nickel which is a long apprenticeship, but in that time I learned a lot about my trade.

~James A. Michener

The dead are dead but they rely on us to fulfill their hopes.

~James A. Michener

I've spent my life trying to be better than I was, and I am a brother to all who share the same aspiration.

~James A. Michener

Every animal that walks the earth, or swims, or flies is precious beyond description, something so rare and wonderful that it equals the stars or the ocean or the mind of man.

~James A. Michener

I am terrified of restrictive religious doctrine, having learned from history that when men who adhere to any form of it are in control, common men like me are in peril.

~James A. Michener

For this is the journey that men and women make, to find themselves. If they fail in this, it doesn't matter much else what they find.

~James A. Michener

Religious hatreds ought not to be propagated at all, but certainly not on a tax-exempt basis.

~James A. Michener

Animals form an inalienable fragment of nature, and if we hasten the disappearance of even one species, we diminish our world and our place in it.

~James A. Michener

It heartens me to think of Verdi who composed thundering operas in his eighties; Michelangelo who did fine work in his ninetieth year, and Titian, who painted better than ever in his one hundredth.

~James A. Michener

In six pages, I can't even say "Hello."

~James A. Michener

A group of two dozen nurses completely surrounded by 100,000 unattached American men.

~James A. Michener

You write that first draft really to see how it's going to come out.

~James A. Michener

I think the crucial thing in the writing career is to find what you want to do and how you fit in. What somebody else does is of no concern whatever except as an interesting variation.

~James A. Michener

On 24 October 1944 Planet Earth was following its orbit about the sun as it has obediently done for nearly five billion years.

~James A. Michener

If a young aspirant had a modicum of skill and a busy typewriter she or he would sooner or later get a foothold in one of the magazines and a leaping start on the ladder upward.

~James A. Michener

[The church's] job is to provide permanent solace and spiritual leadership to the people as a whole, whatever their government at the moment, so long as it stays within the bounds of moral decency.

~James A. Michener

If I were a young man, I would not hesitate at writing anything to get into print, except pornography.

~James A. Michener

First buy a cowboy hat and boots. Then you're on your way to being a Texan.

~James A. Michener

Never forget, son, when you represent Texas, always go first class.

~James A. Michener

A writer can make a fortune in America, but he can't make a living.

~James A. Michener

During my lifetime I have met dozens of writers and photographers in dozens of different countries. But I have encountered no one who could both write and photograph with the artistry of Robert Vavra.

~James A. Michener

I do believe that everyone growing up faces differential opportunities. With me, it was books and travel and some good teachers.

~James A. Michener

I was surprised when shortly after New Year's Day of 1983, the Governor of Texas summoned me to his office, because I hadn't been aware that he knew I was in town.

~James A. Michener

organizations like the church or General Motors promote a man up and up until he reaches a spot which he is obviously incapable of filling, and there they lay him to rest.

~James A. Michener

Contrary to what people think, I slave over my books.

~James A. Michener

I wondered how a man ever got an English girl into bed. What did they do with her hockey stick?

~James A. Michener

It was the silent time before dawn, along the shores of what had been one of the most beautiful lakes in southern Africa.

~James A. Michener

I have only one bit of advice to beginning writers: be sure your novel is read by Rodgers and Hammerstein.

~James A. Michener

I never wrote anything that was published until I was forty.

~James A. Michener

When this is over, I'm not going to be the same guy. I am going to live as if I were a great man.

~James A. Michener

It is difficult to be king when the gods are changing.

~James A. Michener

I think young people ought to seek the experience that is going to knock them off center.

~James A. Michener

The decent thing to do is to get rid of some of this money.

~James A. Michener

No man leaves where he is and seeks a distant place unless he is in some respect a failure.

~James A. Michener

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