

2019 English Studies Camp Proposed Offerings

S1 - (Re)Made in the USA: Cross-Cultural Adaptation

From Cinderella to Mulan, many of the stories we grow up on in 21st-century America are taken from other times and places. In this session, we will use some of these stories as a means to study cross-cultural adaptation and to think about what it means when one culture takes a story from another culture and remakes it in its own image. How do cultures edit, revise, or otherwise remake the “original,” and what is gained or lost in that process? Should the original version of a story have greater value than its adaptations, or do adaptations exert a greater power and reach because they speak to our contemporary moment? What happens when a story moves across media and/or genre? This session will be of particular interest to students who want to explore theories and modes of adaptation and appropriation, literature and/or film, and/or ways in which creative writers have appropriated or adapted stories to fit their own contexts.

S2 - A Novel Idea: How to Get Started, Keep Writing, & Learn about the Book-Publishing Biz

Intended for aspiring novelists, this session will help students tackle large-scale writing projects. From lessons on writing, revising, and marketing strategies to honest discussion about the publishing industry and trends in fiction writing, this course will arm writers with information about how a novel actually reaches readers in this current era.

S3 - Disaster Narratives in Literature & Film

In our seminar, we will look at how disaster narratives are portrayed in literature and film, studying the fundamentals of narrative—technique, tropes, and metaphors—as we watch and discuss some of the most riveting films about natural disasters and worldwide pandemics. But our real focus will be on how stories portray the science and our current anxieties about climate change. As we develop our class project, we will learn how to use historical archives for research and use data visualization applications to present our results. Students will also be encouraged to use their own creative writing to augment our presentation.

S4 - Rhyme and Rhythm: Who Could Ask for Anything More?

This session will read popular song lyrics as poetry and consider how music impacts the meaning of the words. After learning how to say “I love you” in thirty-two bars, we will study how this formula popularized by lyricists and performers of Tin Pan Alley developed across United States history. By analyzing how songs integrate different cultural styles, we will ultimately think about how popular music continues to engage with contemporary social issues through changing media. A creative option will be offered for students who want to try writing their own lyrics, but no prior experience with music is necessary—just an open mind, ready to read and hear how society is reflected and transformed through its songs.

S5 - Events, Conflicts and Protests in America (and its Pop Culture)

In this session students will look at recent events/conflicts/protests that are happening across America (and possibly the world) and pair them with short literature excerpts or films/media clips. We will do reflective writing, watch videos, and discuss current events. We will conclude by creating a proposal or creative work based on our unit.

S6 - Writing as Empowerment: How Telling Our Stories Can Transform Our Lives

Alice Walker once stated that she became a writer in order to process traumatic events she endured as a girl. She credits writing with saving her life. Studies have shown that when we write about depressing experiences we are empowered to move beyond them. In this session, we will read excerpts from memoirs that deal with loss, addiction, and abuse. We will discuss how writing can help people come to terms with the past. There will be time for us to write our own personal essays.

S7 - Before CSI: The Rise of the Detective in Literature & Society

In this session, we will trace the origins of detectives and detective stories starting with Edgar Allan Poe's "Murders in the Rue Morgue" and ending with Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes's "Scandal in Bohemia." In between, we will study historical events, such as the formation of the Detective Department of London's Metropolitan Police in Scotland Yard (1842) and the appearance of the first women detectives in fact and in fiction (1864). We will also explore the many places where detectives appear: in newspapers and magazines, in court reports, and in a range of literary productions such as railway fiction, sensation fiction, "true crime" stories, dramatic plays, and the detective casebook memoir.

S8: Writing Young Adult: Staying Forever Young

This session will explore the exciting and dynamic young adult genre! Through diverse readings and writing prompts, we will delve into what makes this genre's heart beat. We will discuss young adult's universal appeal (half of all young adult readers are adults!), how to craft relevant connections and complications within your work (developing identity, family dynamics, depression, anxiety, first love etc.), and how to elicit poignant emotional responses from your reader. Let's go on a journey of discovery, connection, and fun together by writing young adult and staying forever young!

S9 – Gender and Sexual Diversity in Literature

In this session, we will explore work by and about people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, asexual, queer, etc. We will pair contemporary fiction, essays, and poetry with excerpts from older works like Anne Lister's *I Know My Own Heart* and Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*. For the showcase project, students will create posters showcasing literatures related to a particular theme, identity, or issue.