

2020 English Studies (Virtual) Summer Camp for High School Students

Session Descriptions

Instructional Sessions

Multi Genre Creative Writing Workshop

In this craft workshop we will start by thinking small – about the things and objects that center our creative works. Through a combination of reading and writing exercise students will develop craft techniques that can strengthen creative writing across genre.

***Hamilton*: Who Tells Our Story? You Do!**

With its race-conscious casting and its tour of American musical styles, *Hamilton* has made the Founding Fathers glamorous again. What can we learn if we consider *Hamilton* in relationship to the stories that early Americans told about their lives? In this session, we'll look at *Hamilton*'s lyrics, Lin-Manuel Miranda's annotations of the lyrics, and selected scenes from the show, then sample some true stories written by early Americans as well as some early American fiction, and produce our own creative or critical responses

Tarot Cards & Fiction Writing

You may think tarot cards are used to see the future, but did you know you can use them to unlock your creativity? Learn how to create a basic spread, interpret the cards' symbolism, and apply archetypes to overcome writer's block and clear up the story you're ready to write.

Mental Health Awareness & YA Literature

This session turns to Emery Lord's *When We Collided* to discuss YA Literature's role in raising mental health awareness. Students are welcome to read the entire novel ahead of camp if they choose. During this session we will turn to specific passages (that can stand on their own for those unfamiliar with the larger work) to see the ways in which the text deals with grief, depression, and bipolar disorder.

***Twelfth Night* and Gender: Shakespeare at Play in Early Modern Culture**

*"I am all the daughters of my father's house,
And all the brothers too."*

Twins—a brother and a sister, separated during a shipwreck: they look so much alike that no one can tell them apart when the girl takes on the disguise of a young man. This play references the liminal world of the Twelfth Night celebration, when the status-quo is turned upside down. It no doubt set Shakespeare's audience talking...and will do the same for us as we discuss this timeless text and one recent film adaptation. Students will receive access to Shakespeare's full play and clips from the movie adaptation prior to the start of camp.

Country Blues - Regional Music & Social Class

Regional music often tells the story of – and speaks directly to – the communities it stems from. This session looks at a music genre that could be titled “country blues” looking beyond the common tropes of country music and delving into the way artists and songs attend to issues concerning socioeconomic class.

Basketball in/and Poetry

Basketballs beat rhythmically across blacktop courts, syllables beat musically across lines of poetry. But what do they have to do with one another? Sports and literature might not seem like a common pairing but sports motifs do, indeed, surface in contemporary creative writing and this session turns to one specific sport and one specific genre to see the ways in which basketball is represented by poets today.

How to Start Writing Your Novel

Whether you're an avid reader of novels or an aspiring novelist, this session will help students conceptualize (and possibly start to tackle large-scale) writing projects. In this session participants will complete exercises that will help them generate ideas and get writing.

Humor Writing Workshop

Comedy is an art, not a science. What one person finds funny, another might find boring, perplexing, or offensive. We will examine the nature of comedy as represented by various writers and media producers and complete exercises to try our own hand at writing our own humorous text.

The Rise of the Woman Detective in *Fact and Fiction*

The nineteenth century saw the rise of the male detective starting in 1842 when the London Metropolitan police established the plainclothes, all male detective department in Scotland Yard. That same year, Edgar Allan Poe launched the genre of detective fiction with his short stories featuring the amateur sleuth, Auguste Dupin. The popularity of such stories grew throughout the Victorian era and reached a high point in the celebrated literary creation of Sherlock Holmes. Even those who don't study Victorian literature may already be aware of this trajectory. Much less is known about the rise of the female detective. This session will look at this mysterious and often overlooked figure the Victorian woman detective in fiction or in real life. This session will examine her beginnings as a spy and police informant in penny dreadfuls, as well as the unwitting female detectives in sensation fiction and those women characters who claim professional affiliation with Scotland Yard. These characters appear over a century before actual women became members of the Met's Criminal Investigation Department (CID), so we shall also look at the facts concerning real life counterparts to these fictional characters. Campers will receive four short stories to be read in preparation for our time together in this session.

Analyzing Rap Music Stylistics & Social Critiques

Audiovisual texts have many elements that can help underscore their messages. This session compares rap music videos from two different eras analyzing the ways in which their stylistics (editing, lighting, camera angles, and more) amplify their social critiques about marginalization. By the end of this session students will have enhanced media analysis skills to apply to their own popular culture texts of choice.

Crafting the Self: The Art of the Personal Essay

In this session students will learn strategies for writing about themselves in professional and academic contexts. The primary focus will be on considering approaches that might serve students well when crafting college admission and/or scholarship essays.

Non-Fiction Creative Writing Workshop

"I have been through some terrible things in my life, some of which actually happened" by Mark Twain. In this workshop we will delve into our existing knowledge and personal experience in order to separate the fact from the fiction in telling our own stories, while experimenting with creative techniques in our writing. We will explore the writing process from brainstorming activities, to drafting and revision strategies, to the utilization of peer review to help us learn to translate our thoughts from personal truths to a more public forum. We will use journal writing as a tool of self-discovery, self-expression, and idea generation. Effective journaling also helps build habits of mind that strengthen the writing practice.

Trail of a Tale: The Evolution of Fairy Tales and Their Adaptations

In this course, you will examine the earliest written origins of fairy tales as well as their subsequent adaptations. Through this exploration, you will write your own retelling—short story or poetry—from alternate points of view. Historical and cultural contexts and themes will be discussed to provide a solid foundation for your work. Step into the exciting and changing world of “Once upon a time,” and create your own path

***The Hate You Give*, Contemporary Music & Social Commentary**

Cultural texts are a product of their times. This session looks at the ways in which contemporary texts are wrestling with the current societal struggles, specifically racial divides and the related incidences of police brutality. Many will be familiar with Angie Thomas’s young adult novel, *The Hate U Give* or its 2018 film adaptation. While students are encouraged to read or view the film prior to the class, a review of its trailer during the session will help place this text into conversation with others (e.g. contemporary rap songs) to see the ways in which authors and artists are carrying out important social commentary.

Fiction Creative Writing Reading & Workshop

In this session a fiction author will share his work and lead students through various craft exercises to develop their own writing skills. Students are encouraged to come with questions about writing process and the contemporary publishing landscape for a rich discussion of the ways in which authors navigate the creative writing world today.

Evening Sessions (Optional)

Film Viewing & Discussion: The Attack

Join us for a viewing of this 2012 film that delves into the complicated terrain of terrorism, religion, politics, and family. This is story of Dr. Amin Jaafari is an assimilated Arab surgeon who seems to have it all with a promising career with honors among the Israelis in Tel Aviv. That all changes after a devastating terrorist suicide bombing and his beloved wife, Siham, is found among the dead as the primary suspect. Although initially refusing to accept that as Shin Bet interrogates him, Amin comes to realize the allegations are true. Now, the ostracized Amin resolves to find out on his own why Siham had so strong a conviction that she kept secret from him. However, the answers prove hard to come by and the truths involved have a terrible pain of their own.

TV Viewing/Discussion – Welcome to Gilead: Are We Living in *The Handmaid's Tale*?

When it was first published in 1985, Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale* was widely considered a dystopic fantasy that could never actually take place. These days, that seems less clear, as our country moves toward limiting the rights of underrepresented groups. This evening entertainment activity includes a viewing of the pilot episode of Hulu’s adaptation of Atwood’s novel. Discussion will focus on the issues raised in Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale*, comparing them to current challenges to reproductive, minority and LGBTQ rights in the United States.

Never Let Me Go is a 2010 British dystopian romantic tragedy film based on Kazuo Ishiguro's 2005 novel. The film is set in an alternative history and centers on Kathy, Ruth and Tommy who become entangled in a love triangle during their years at an idyllic boarding school. Slowly viewers come to understand that the three are clones tragically destined to die after donating their organs unless the rumor that those who can prove they are truly in love can receive a deferral. Post-film viewing will include discussion of ethics as we continue to race ahead in our own reality down paths of accelerated technology and medical breakthroughs.