

2023 EIU English Studies Camp Session Descriptions

S1 - The Stage Life of Words

This session provides an opportunity to explore the craft of the playwright and delve into the possibilities of stage storytelling. We will engage in exercises to deepen our understanding of the practice of theater and learn techniques for putting language into *play* --- all while creating individual ten-minute Sketches.

S2 - Exploring & Creating Fanfiction

In this session, we will explore the history of fanfiction, how some of what we consider classic literature could be considered fanfiction, and what fanfiction means to us today. We will look at the past, present, and future of fanfiction and how it has shaped a generation of young readers and writers. This form of literature has had a significant cultural impact and has even seeped into our mainstream media. But why is it still considered a lesser form of writing? Our final class project for this session will be a short fanfiction (oneshot) on the media of your choosing.

S3 - Nontraditional Poetry

This session will include an overview of poetic forms that students may be less familiar with including, but not limited to, erasure/blackout poetry, found poetry, visual poetry, haiku, ekphrastic poetry, free verse poetry, spoken word, and even song and rap as poetry. We will view examples from Button Poetry for the spoken word poems and examples from books and websites for the other forms. After analyzing examples, students will practice writing their own poems. Those who are comfortable with sharing will share theirs and ask for feedback if they want it, or we will split into smaller groups to do mini workshops if time allows.

S4 - Social Commentary and/in Creative Works: Finding Your Voice in the 21st Century

In this session, we will learn about and examine a variety of contemporary issues as well as how authors and artists are tackling these issues, while not letting their voices be silenced. We will dive into the power of spoken and slam poetry, memoir, plays, and even photography focusing on how these mediums provide social commentary and give people a voice. In this session, you will aim to find your own voice, speaking out on what matters to you. You will also have the opportunity to preform your final pieces in front of a live audience or showcase your work creatively in an alternate format.

S5 - Comic-ally Becoming Better Writers

In this session, we will explore how analyzing and creating comics can help improve our writing ability. We will focus on how comics can help structure our prose, reveal the most important parts of what want to write, and improve our ability to pre-write and communicate. In order to accomplish these goals, we will work together to create our own comics and analyze how the parts of a published comic work together to create a structured text. (No art skills required!)

S6 - Intro to Queer Poetry

In this session, we will read poetry from prominent queer writers of the 19th, 20th, and 21st Century. We will have roundtable discussions of works by poets like Oscar Wilde, Audre Lorde, and Silas Denver Melvin, paying special attention to recurring themes and content. Half the session time will be used for writing and workshopping the students' own poetry. Our final project will be to construct a zine of poetry/explications inspired by the queer poets we read in class.

S7- The Rise of the Woman Detective in Fact and Fiction

The nineteenth century saw the rise of the male police 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 literary beginnings as a spy and police informant in penny dreadfuls, as well as 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. Those who sign up for this session will receive four short stories to be read in preparation for our time together.

S8 - Be a Bly on the Wall!: Exploring & Overcoming Toxic Masculinity through Writing

Toxic Masculinity is a phrase that has embedded itself into our vocabulary and society, but what does it mean and how can we overcome it? This session will encourage and challenge students to create their own literary pieces as they discover and travel with poet Robert Bly and discuss his acclaimed novel, *Iron John*. This session will also discuss The Men's Mythopoetic Movement, The Romantics and much more. Students will also learn and discuss how to analyze what masculinity effectively means by looking at other fictional characters throughout literature, and how we as a society can use their character traits to advocate for healthy masculinity, self-care, and effective leadership.