

College Writing/Dual Enrollment Creative Writing Summer Reading

The first portion of this class will be college writing. Basically, we will be crafting your college admission essay. That essay is essentially a very short memoir. So, part of your summer reading will be to read a memoir. Choose one memoir from the following list and then follow the instructions below to complete this portion of your summer reading.

Memoirs (Choose 1)

The Yellow House by Sarah Broom

Boy Erased by Garrard Conley

Manifesto: On Never Giving Up by Bernadine Evaristo

Hole in My Life by Jack Gantos

Admissions by Kendra James

Between Two Kingdoms: What Almost Dying Taught Me About Living by Suleika Jaouad

This is Going to Hurt by Adam Kay

On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft by Stephen King

H is for Hawk by Hellen Macdonald

On the Move by Oliver Sacks

The Deeper the Roots by Michael Tubbs

A List of Things That Didn't Kill Me by Jason Schmidt

Educated by Tara Westover

Please break the memoir into five equal portions. For instance, *The Yellow House* is 304 pages, divided by 5 is 61 pages per section. So, approximately every 61 pages you will stop and create a journal entry. Each journal entry is to be a response to the following prompt:

As you read this memoir, consider not just what the author chooses to tell, but *how* they choose to tell it. Memoirists make deliberate decisions about structure, tone, detail, and voice to shape a compelling narrative out of real life. Choose a moment, scene, or theme in the memoir that you found especially powerful or meaningful. Then, reflect on the following:

- What choices did the author make in telling this story—what did they include or leave out, how did they present themselves and others, and how did their tone or structure influence your emotional response?
- Why do you think these choices were effective (or not) in helping the author achieve their purpose?
- How do you relate personally to this part of the memoir? Does it remind you of something from your own life, and if so, how might *you* choose to tell that story?
- Finally, thinking ahead to your own college entrance essays, how can you apply what you've learned from this memoirist's storytelling? What lessons will you take about voice, vulnerability, focus, or authenticity?

Your responses should each be 3–4 paragraphs long and thoughtfully connect the author's writing decisions to your own experiences and writing goals.

***Bird by Bird* by Anne Lamott**

For your other summer reading text you are going to work with *Bird by Bird* by Anne Lamott.

You do not have to read the whole book. I would like you to read the book in sections and then write a reflection after each section. Each reflection should take up a page or two of your journal. Use these questions to guide your reflection:

- What advice or idea stood out to me from these chapters?
- How can I use this advice in my writing?
- What ideas in these chapters make me excited for creative writing?
- What ideas in these chapters make me nervous about creative writing?
- What writing technique(s) (diction, sentence structure, literary element or device) did Lamott use in this chapter that stood out to me? How could I do something similar in my writing?

From *Part One: Writing*:

Section 1: "Getting Started"

Section 2: "Short Assignments" and "Shitty First Drafts"

Section 3: "Character" "Plot" "Dialogue"

Section 4: "False Starts" and "How Do You Know When You're Done"

Section 5: "Looking Around" and "The Moral Point of View"

From *Part Two: The Writing Frame of Mind*

Section 6: "Looking Around" and "The Moral Point of View"

So, your journal should contain six, 1-2 page reflections, one for each section listed above.

If you have any questions regarding summer reading, please email me at:
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