

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Trumbull, Connecticut

H/ACP Creative Writing

Grade 12

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H/ACP CREATIVE WRITING

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CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS

The Trumbull High School community engages in an environment conducive to learning which believes that all students will **read** and **write effectively**, therefore communicating in an articulate and coherent manner. All students will participate in activities **that present problem-solving through critical thinking**. Students will use technology as a tool applying it to decision making. We believe that by fostering self-confidence, self-directed and student-centered activities, we will promote **independent thinkers and learners**. We believe **ethical conduct** to be paramount in sustaining the welcoming school climate that we presently enjoy.

Approved 8/26/2011

INTRODUCTION & PHILOSOPHY

In the traditional English classroom students work on expository writing skills, analyzing and connecting to literature as readers. In this course, students work on creative writing skills, analyzing and creating nonfiction and fiction, reading and observing as writers. In keeping with the English Department's overall philosophy of developing life-long learners, a goal of this course is that students become life-long writers and lovers of the written word. Students are asked to take writing risks and reflect on their choices and accomplishments. For many this course provides the opportunity to break new ground in some way, developing their writing voices and, hopefully, the confidence to let it be heard, on paper and aloud.

This course focuses on the craft of writing and provides students with experiences in creative nonfiction (engaging in such focuses as personal narrative, reviews, and reflection) and creative fiction (engaging in such focuses as children's literature, screenplay, and short story). An important part of the writing process, freewriting is built into the curriculum because the only way to get our ideas *flowing* is to keep our pens or fingers *moving*. The first curriculum unit places creative fiction and creative nonfiction in discourse with each other in order to study and develop the craft and art of writing. This unit builds and blends foundational creative skills of each genre as dictated by the needs of the class and students.

Within this large unit, students will focus on different aspects of the creative process including idea generation, incorporating sensory experiences and details; style and genre criteria; sentence, tense, and point of view variation; developing authentic dialogue; characterization; setting; creating mood; and storyboarding. Students work in a writing workshop setting creating several short pieces each week and developing larger, more substantive works for incorporation into their portfolios. What students come to understand very early in the course is that one must write in order to be a writer. Because of this, they participate in daily habitual writing, gathering material to be used later to inspire their creativity and larger pieces. Students must come prepared to write every single day (in and out of class) and learn to take chances, make mistakes, share their writing with others, welcome critique, start from scratch, and rebuild and polish ideas, through revision and editing, to their best possible versions. In essence, they work out daily and build their writing muscles so that they can move from short exercises to longer sustained pieces, from a scene or character sketch to a fully developed short story. First drafts are creative sparks, but true creative writing requires taking a step back to give one's ideas time to breathe before jumping back in to revise with new eyes. At the end of the course, the hope is that

they will have the inclination and the stamina to sit down and craft a piece and refine it until they are satisfied with and proud of their results.

As writers are also readers and observers, students will read many short works and different creative media as mentor texts to aid in studying their craft. The course teaches students that, in order to be a writer, one must read to study the writing choices of other writers. With each genre they explore they read selections in that area. The purpose of reading in the course is not to analyze the work for the sake of comprehension and literary analysis but to use the pieces as a lesson from the author on writing choices and moves, amassing a "bag of tricks," the skills and habits a writer develops and utilizes over time.

As part of a community of writers, students will share their own work aloud in small and larger groups of their peers. Together, students and teachers create a positive, open environment where students share, learn and grow as writers by giving and receiving constructive commentary and critique. Students are not permitted to keep their creativity and writing to themselves for the entire semester. Continuing to broaden their audiences, students are also encouraged to try to publish their work not only in the digital writing portfolios but to submit their work to a number of contests including PTSA Reflections, regional and national publications and contests to which they can submit their work for consideration. Their work is submitted, with their permission, to Trumbull High School's literary and arts magazine *Creative Minds*.

This course is for both the beginning and experienced creative writer, but it is strongly recommended that students have a developing passion for language and creating. To succeed, students simply need to insert and tap into their creativity, let go of their fears, trust one another, and know that we all have stories worth telling. Even the most published writers remain forever in the realm of "continuous improvement" of their work.

Major goals are for each student to develop a writing voice and creative lens. The course gives students the freedom to express themselves and practice the skills of writing. Hopefully, once discovered, their inner writers will journey with them after the semester ends.

Due to its comprehensive nature as representative of the student's body of work over the entire course of study, the Culminating Portfolio is in lieu of a final examination in the course. Since Creative Writing 12 ACP/H is a portfolio course, all students must complete the Culminating Portfolio as a major assessment in the second marking period. Failure to submit the Culminating Portfolio will result in the student completing an additional assignment during the exam period to demonstrate mastery of course concepts. This on-demand performance task and reflection is meant to support students who do not submit a portfolio to successfully complete the course.

Mandatory Honors Section Project/Criteria*

Students may take the course at the Advanced College-Preparatory or the Honors level; for Honors credit, in addition to completing all regular assignments and anthology requirements each marking period, students will:

- read and annotate all mentor text selections as stipulated by the instructor;
- complete two critical article responses about author's craft:
 - one article will be designated by the teacher

- one article will be self-selected by the student;
- revise a substantial section of at least four pieces of writing for the Culminating Portfolio.

*Students may NOT retroactively drop from Honors to ACP to avoid the consequence of not completing the designated requirements/criteria.

COURSE GOALS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2.C	Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2.D	Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.A	Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.B	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.C	Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution).
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.D	Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.E	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the

course of the narrative.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.5

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.6

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3

Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.5

Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.6

Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.5	Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.3	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.2	Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.3	Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

COURSE ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

Students will understand that . . .

- they can come to better understand themselves and their craft through developing discipline as writers through regular practice, and participating in the writing and creative process.
- writing is a process in which they must engage from the drafting stage through publication and reflection in order to grow as writers and thinkers.

- in order to produce effective written pieces for audience and purpose, they must reason critically.
- choosing, evaluating, reading, analyzing, and synthesizing a variety of sources, creative media, and publications as mentor texts is important to developing one's own style and writing "bag of tricks."
- by reading, modeling, and writing in many genres, one can develop a writing voice.
- reading and writing skills are transferable across genres and forms.
- a variety of organizational patterns exist for different forms of written texts, and that audience and purpose play a role in students' authorial choices.
- there are key differences between informal writing and academic writing, personal and public writing, and creative nonfiction and fiction writing.
- mistakes provide opportunities for growth.
- sharing writing with others and welcoming critique and commentary provide opportunities for growth.

COURSE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What is creativity?
- What forms can creativity take in writing?
- What is a writer's craft?
- How do writers generate their ideas and craft their pieces?
- What moves and choices can writers make to achieve their purpose and enhance meaning, and how do these moves influence writing and reading of pieces?
- What are the differences between public and private, informal and academic, and nonfiction and fiction writing?
- What does it mean to read like a writer?
- Why is storytelling an essential part of being human?
- How can we contribute to the greater collection of the human narrative?

COURSE KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

Students will know . . .

- a writer's voice relates to their style and utilization of writing moves and choices.
- key terms to identify and analyze writing choices.
- writing choices/moves: syntax and sentence variation; sensory detail and figurative language (metaphor, simile, imagery, symbolism); organization, shifts, and structure; punctuation; tone and mood; form and mode; diction; motif and theme; dialogue; repetition; characterization, plot development and other literary devices and terms studied and mastered in previous years' English courses that students will now apply as writers rather than readers.
- an author's point of view and purpose in a text.
- how writers effectively use writing conventions and rhetorical techniques to communicate ideas.
- how to generate ideas from their experiences and observations, building writing inventories.

- “read like writers,” choosing and evaluating sources and creative media as mentor texts.
- by reading, modeling, and writing in many genres, one can develop a writing voice.
- how to evaluate the effectiveness of an author’s creative choices and how they contribute to the overall impact of text.
- audience awareness and purpose when making writing choices such as structure, point of view, tone, and conventions is important.
- the key differences between informal writing and academic writing, personal and public writing, and creative nonfiction and fiction writing.
- different modes of writing are tailored to different audiences and purposes.
- mistakes provide opportunities for growth.
- sharing writing with others and welcoming critique and commentary provide opportunities for growth.

Students will be able to . . .

- follow the steps of the writing process: drafting, revising, editing, publishing.
- appropriately organize their ideas when writing and speaking for genre, audience, purpose, meaning and/or task.
- read texts closely to gain a deeper understanding of the ideas contained within the art of masterful writing.
- identify modes of creative writing based on their distinct qualities.
- analyze pieces of creative writing based on their structure, craft, and target audience.
- utilize creative writing to further their understanding of themselves and the world.
- participate meaningfully in discussions to display and/or enhance insight into a text or idea.
- collaborate with others and extend collaboration via technology to gain insight, improve writing techniques, and realize their own writing style and voice in comparison to others.
- generate ideas using techniques modeled in class such as prompts, environment, mentor texts, writing inventories.
- provide and receive critique and commentary to further improve written expression, style, voice, and skill identification, usage, and development.

VISION OF THE GRADUATE

The Honors World Literature course purposefully integrates the eight core competencies outlined in Trumbull Public Schools’ Vision of the Graduate. These competencies are not treated as abstract ideals, but as real, observable behaviors and mindsets that students develop through reading, writing, discussion, collaboration, and reflective learning experiences.

Vision of the Graduate Competency	How It Is Embedded Throughout the Course
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Communication	Students communicate complex ideas through creative fiction and nonfiction, research-based writing, and multimedia presentations that require clear claims, textual evidence, and audience awareness. The course is workshop based, and regular participation in the writing process builds students' ability to articulate perspectives thoughtfully and creatively. In Unit One: Creative Fiction and Creative Nonfiction, students research the genre of Children's books and present their findings in order to articulate a need in the industry, defending a clear, evidence-based conclusion. They then go on to develop their own children's book, communicating their ideas creatively on the page. In Unit Two: The Class Anthology, students produce an Author's Note that explains how their craft choices impacted their final draft.
Self-Efficacy	Through sustained independent reading and annotation of mentor texts and ownership of long-term projects, students develop confidence in their ability to tackle complex texts, concepts, and express original interpretations. In Unit One: Creative Fiction and Creative Nonfiction, students independently analyze writers' approaches to writing and their choices and apply their learned skills to the creation of fictional and nonfiction pieces, building confidence in their intellectual voice. In Unit Three: Culminating Portfolio, students actively revise their previous writing and reflect in short epilogues about each piece, reinforcing ownership of learning and personal growth.
Critical Thinking & Problem Solving	Students must synthesize skills across and between units and the fiction and nonfiction genres to work through the writing process. In Unit One: Creative Fiction and Creative Nonfiction, students develop an inquiry-based question and complete research about the genre of Children's books, presenting their findings in order to articulate a need or pattern within the industry, defending a clear, evidence-based conclusion. In Unit Three: Culminating Portfolio, students address errors and revise previous writing in order to improve their pieces to better reflect their skill acquisition and assignment purpose, underscoring their ability to think critically about their own work and solve any issues from previous drafts.
Collaboration	Group presentations and writings, and continuous participation in sharing and peer-editing require students to assume roles, manage responsibilities, and work toward shared goals and collective problem-solving. In Unit One: Creative Fiction and Creative Nonfiction, students work in small groups to design and craft a script (screen, stage or radio), collectively developing the plot and making choices regarding writer's craft. In preparation to write a children's book, the research activity requires teams to curate multimedia resources and inform their peers about a topic of their choice that impacts the children's book genre.

Growth Mindset	Across all three units, students draft, revise, and refine their pieces, strengthening their writing through feedback and iteration. In Unit Three: The Culminating Portfolio, students revise pieces from the semester, reflecting upon decisions made during this revision process. They learn to persevere through employing the constructive criticism of their peers and instructor as they make purposeful revisions.
Integrity	In our new age of AI, students will engage in discussions about respectful engagement with this new technology reinforcing accountability and principled discourse. Students will submit each of their pieces to turnitin.com to show that their work is their own. In Unit One: Creative Fiction and Creative Nonfiction, students will practice ethical citation and responsible use of sources if and when they generate images for their children's book. Students follow MLA citation guidelines and evaluate source credibility as outlined in CCSS W.11-12.8, reinforcing responsible scholarship.
Innovation	In Unit One: Creative Fiction and Creative Nonfiction, the range of projects invite students to explore and express creativity through various multimodal assessments. In Unit Two: Class Anthology and Unit Three: Culminating Portfolio, students must revise while justifying their conceptual decisions. Students select tools and formats that best communicate their ideas, blending creativity with academic rigor.
Emotional Intelligence	Across all units, students must practice self-awareness and sensitivity to others when providing feedback during any part of the writing process. As writing is often seen as an extension of self, students must be mindful of how they provide critical feedback to their peers. This holds true across all units as the course is workshop based. Students must also retain and practice a growth mindset as they receive and apply feedback to their own pieces.

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Name

Creative Writing

Level

Advanced College Prep/Honors*

Prerequisites

Successful completion of grades 9, 10, and 11 English

General Description of the Course

This course pairs the exploration and analysis of writing choices across a variety of creative genres such as nonfiction, fiction, advertising, television and film, children's literature, and memoir with the creation of student portfolios containing brainstorm and drafts, revised pieces, and reflections. Within these units of study, students will focus on different aspects of creative writing, including: idea generation; sensory experience development; sentence and diction variation; point of view, dialogue, plot, and characterization; genre criteria; revision; and storyboarding. Working in a writer's workshop model, students create several short pieces each week and then revise and develop larger, more substantive works for incorporation into their portfolios. As writers are also readers, students will read and analyze short works as mentor texts to aid in improving their craft. As part of a community of writers, they will share their own work aloud in small and large groups of their peers while also developing and contributing to a class anthology. The major goals of the course are for each student to develop a writing voice, new creative lenses, and the understanding that creativity is a foundation skill across other fields and subject areas. This course is for both the beginning and experienced creative writer, but it is strongly recommended that students have a passion and the stamina for habitual writing, revision, and idea-generation.

The course is heterogeneously grouped with ACP and Honors students learning together; Students may NOT retroactively drop from Honors to ACP to avoid the consequence of not completing the designated requirements/criteria.

Assured Assessments

Formative Assessments:

- Idea generation/ quick-write writing prompts
- Commenting on/annotating* writer's choices with mentor texts (Honors*)
- Reading reviews and forming criteria
- Short/flash fiction
- Writing History

Summative Assessments:

- Portfolio (both H/ACP)
- Class Anthology Story (both H/ACP)
- Creative Fiction (both H/ACP - in addition to the Class Anthology Story, complete at least two from this category):
 - scene sketch
 - script for sitcom, film, stage, or radio
 - children's book
 - short story
- Creative Nonfiction (both H/ACP - complete at least one from this category):
 - narrative
 - review writing
 - genre-research or presentation
- *Honors Designation - must complete the above requirements and the following:
 - Mentor text annotations
 - Critical responses

Writing Core Texts

- [Dicks, Matthew, and Dan Kennedy. *Storyworthy Engage, Teach, Persuade, and Change Your Life through the Power of Storytelling*. New World Library, 2018.](#)
- [Kittle, Penny. *Micro Mentor Texts: Using Short Passages from Great Books to Teach Writers Craft*. Scholastic, 2022.](#)
- [Sepetys, Ruta. *You: The Story: A Writer's Guide to Craft Through Memory*. Philomel Books, 2024.](#)

Writing Supplemental Texts

- [Ives, Lucy. *three six five: prompts, acts, divinations \(an inexhaustible compendium for writing\)*. Siglio, 2026.](#)
- The New York Times. *The New York Times*. Web. <<http://www.nytimes.com/>>. A great source for high quality nonfiction.

UNIT ONE

Creative Fiction and Creative Nonfiction

Unit 1 Goals

Bolded goals denote **primary unit goals*

At the completion of this unit students will:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3 | Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.A | Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.B | Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.C | Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution). |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.D | Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters. |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.4 | Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.6 | Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information. |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.10 | Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. |

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

Unit 1 Essential Questions

- What is creativity?
- What forms can creativity take in writing?
- Why do we write?
- How do writers create?
- What is a writer's craft?
- How do writers generate their ideas and craft their pieces?
- What moves and choices can writers make to achieve their purpose and enhance meaning, and how do these moves influence writing and reading of pieces?
- How can one generate ideas?
- How do point of view and sensory details impact the telling of a story?
- What is creative nonfiction?
- What are the criteria of the nonfiction genre?
- What is the tradition of the personal narrative?
- How does one utilize writing choices to achieve purpose and enhance meaning?

Scope and Sequence

Continuing over the course of the entire semester, unit one begins on the very first day with the initial notebook creation and writing. Small, quick-writes in the students' notebook should be daily practice in the course used to build stamina, comfort, and skill. Prompts can be tailored by the instructor to match the skill of a particular lesson, or to simply spark creativity.

As the first formal piece, which is also used as a baseline for writing, students are purposely given little instruction and asked to complete a Writing History. The goal of this assignment is strictly to see what students produce based on their prior knowledge and skills, which will allow the instructor to tailor future instruction. This assignment will earn a completion grade at the start and will be revisited at the end of the semester when students revise it utilizing the knowledge and skills they've gained over the course.

The first curriculum unit is intentionally comprehensive as it places creative fiction and creative nonfiction in discourse with each other, blending and building foundational creative skills of each genre as dictated by the needs of the class and students. Assignments and

skills can fall into either or both categories of creative fiction or nonfiction. For instance, once students are familiar with the rules for formatting dialogue, they can examine the different ways writers employ dialogue and how it functions in fiction versus nonfiction. When writing a children's book, students may choose to develop a fictional plot about a child attending a field trip to an aquarium, OR a student might write an informative text about axolotls for an elementary school audience. For a script, students can invent the plot for a sitcom of their own invention (think *Friends*), or write a podcast that discusses the nature of friendship (think *This American Life*). Ultimately, the needs and interests of the classes and students can dictate the rhythm of the unit as students develop the craft and art of writing.

Thinking and producing creatively is a challenge; students often feel that they or their work is not good enough. This may be because they're not practiced in their creativity since it is not a skill that is established and continually reinforced throughout their academic experiences. But the opportunity to practice and refine creative skills unlocks potential and inspires a level of confidence that sets them up for future success. High school seniors are about to enter their postsecondary lives where, whether they pursue their studies, a trade, or begin careers, they will be challenged with new learning and experiences, which makes this course even more important. Creativity is a foundational element of all other fields and subject areas, especially in our current societal climate of rapid and constant change and invention. While students learn to start from scratch, take writing risks and make mistakes, share their writing with others, accept critique, and rebuild and polish their ideas through the writing process, they practice their ability to adapt to changing situations and work through discomfort. The course lends itself to not only academic but also social-emotional benefits, and opening the course to a wider range of students will increase the reach of the benefits.

Much of the work from this unit will lay the foundation and become the inspiration for later writings. This initial unit is meant to be a crash course in creativity to prove to students that they have unique ideas and voices that should be shared. We start the course revving our creative engines, compiling ideas that touch on a range of fictional and creative nonfiction strategies, forms, and topics. Bouncing between nonfiction and fiction productively blurs the line between the two domains and allows for students to practice drawing on techniques from both sides in their work.

Depending upon student need and interest, teachers will select assignments for students to engage with, ultimately assessing four finished pieces. *In addition to meeting this requirement, students seeking the Honors designation must complete all mentor text annotations and one critical article response as summative assessments.* Throughout this unit and the semester, students will work in collaborative writing groups to give and receive feedback in a positive and safe environment. Students will also begin establishing work for their Culminating Portfolio, starting with the writing history they create for this unit, adding to their body of work with each piece they produce. Assignments that are not assessed for a grade during this unit (such as notebook/journal entries) may be used as a springboard for new pieces that students may include as part of their Culminating Portfolio.

Throughout the course, students will participate in and follow the steps of the writing process: idea generating, drafting, revising, editing, publishing. Students will participate in this process and in collaborative writings through Google Suite.

- **Writer's Notebook:** Within the first days of class, students will select and decorate their own writer's notebook before setting initial writing goals for the semester. Throughout the course, students will practice daily habitual writing through prompt responses and free writing opportunities in addition to documenting and organizing idea generating prompts and pieces. Students will engage in informal, habitual writing where they respond to teacher-provided prompts for 5 minutes or more in a notebook or document where they will organize their daily responses. The assignment's purpose is as a brainstorming activity to formulate and generate student ideas, scaffold learning, check for understanding, and connect students to the idea of creativity. In addition, teachers can capture information about individual and class understandings, skills, and interests to inform instruction.
- **Writing History:** The goal of this assignment is for students to thoroughly consider and discuss their experiences with writing and creativity over the course of their life. They will introduce themselves as students, writers, and creators over the course of their lives with honesty, details, and reflection. Students will reflect on their previous writing and creative experiences throughout their educational careers.
- **Mentor Texts*:** Students will examine how authors write using choices and moves, reading and annotating excerpts about the craft of writing from various published authors. These excerpts will serve as a "master class" on writing, offering students a number of different techniques and ideas to consider and apply to their own writing. Readings and viewings will be assigned throughout the semester at the discretion of the instructor based on the unit, lesson, and skill. Student annotations will be collected & assessed based on text interactions. Students may have the option and opportunity to find and contribute additional readings and excerpts for review. Students will read a series of mentor texts, personal narratives and other creative nonfiction, *as writers* to identify, evaluate, and then practice the writing moves/choices the authors make to advance and tell their stories. The assignment's purpose is to expose students to writing choices and moves, the skills and habits a writer develops and utilizes over time. Students will work to amass a "bag of tricks" to aid in studying their craft. Teachers can capture information about individual and class understandings, skills, and interests to inform instruction. **Students seeking the Honors designation will be assessed on all mentor text annotations.*
- **Critical Article Response*:** 1-2 page reaction to a writer on writing. One article will be teacher-selected and the other student-selected. *Students seeking the Honors designation must complete all mentor text annotations and one critical article response as summative assessments.*
- **Creative Fiction** (students will engage with at least two from this category):
 - Scene sketch: asks students to develop one of their short pieces initially inspired by a Idea Generation Quick-Write Writing Prompts into a formal, revised piece. The student must expand the initial piece into a scene that effectively utilizes writing choices discussed during the introductory unit such as dialogue, point of view and/or sensory details. One of the possible formats is a song story scene where students choose a song that lends itself to narrative, brainstorm the story they imagine while listening to the song, and then produce a short descriptive story scene inspired by the song, selecting an effective point of view and crafting sensory details. They will produce a detailed and complete snapshot of a moment inspired by some element of the song (beat, lyrics, instrument, chorus, mood, intro, bridge, outro, etc.). The assignment will assess students' idea generation, revision skills, and writing choices.

- ****Script for stage, screen or radio** - students will work collaboratively to produce sections of a sitcom, stage script, or podcast. For a sitcom, students would choose Trouble, Muddle, or Triumph to write out in Celtx. For a stage production, students would complete two scenes from an act. For a podcast, students would write the equivalent of 5-10 minutes of a broadcast.
- ****[Children's book](#)** - Students will create a children's book that, based on our presentations, your own research, and your reading of other children's books, fills a gap, addresses a need or specific audience, or follows a trend within the children's book genre. Students will write the FULL text of the story and illustrate and design the book's cover and an additional three pages.
- **Short story** - Students will create a 2-4 page story that adheres to the stipulations of the assignment. For instance, instructors may choose to assign a [Lore Drop](#)**, a story on ****[Collections](#)**, a story based on Thrift-shop items, or other topic of their choice.
- **Creative Nonfiction** (students will engage with at least one from this category - assignments with ****** in the Creative Fiction could fall under this category if they are a retelling of real-life events):
 - **Narrative**: students write a personal narrative. For example, students might write about a significant life moment, practicing layering in stakes to their writing with a series of techniques (for example: elephants, backpacks, crystal balls, hour glasses, breadcrumbs). Students review samples of personal narratives, evaluating their openings, line of reasoning, narrative modes, etc.
 - **Review writing/criticism**: After a close study of published and student sample reviews and developing the criteria for review writing, students will produce a review within one of the following categories: food, film/TV, or music where they employ writing moves/choices to form a final piece that showcases student choices in form and organization, incorporating sensory experiences and details; adherence to style and genre criteria; sentence and tense variation; and the development of compelling moments within the narrative that speak to the meaning of the piece. The assignment will assess students' skills, use of details, and mechanics.
 - **Genre research and/or presentation**: requires students to develop and research a question before creating a compelling, narrative presentation. For example, students may generate a research question about children's books as a means of exploring the genre (What effect does size and style of font have on audience engagement? or Does the inclusion of numbers in children's books improve numeracy and foster cognitive abilities within children?). Students produce a presentation that unfolds their research process and conclusions, making effective choices given their topic and audience.

Unit Assured Assessments

Teachers can select additional formative activities based on student skills from the following examples or other creative writing activities as suggested by the NCTE or College Board:

Options for Formative Assessments:

- Writing History
- Five-Minute Writing Prompt Response Log
- Prompts

- A-Z lists
- First, Last, Best Worst Memory Generator
- Add a Sentence Class Story
- Creative Vision Boards
- Writing History
- Writing History
- Synesthesia & Sensory Details
- Point of View Notes and Samples
- Thrift Store or FB Marketplace item story
- Note for Random Person

Options for Summative Assessments:

- Creative Fiction (students will engage with at least two from this category):
 - scene sketch
 - sitcom or short script (film or stage)
 - children's book
 - short story
 - character profile
 - dialogue-driven story
- Creative Nonfiction (students will engage with at least one from this category):
 - narrative
 - review writing
 - genre research and/or presentation
 - criticism
 - podcast or speech

Unit 1 Resources

Core

- Dicks, Matthew, and Dan Kennedy. *Storyworthy Engage, Teach, Persuade, and Change Your Life through the Power of Storytelling*. New World Library, 2018.
- Kittle, Penny. *Micro Mentor Texts: Using Short Passages from Great Books to Teach Writers Craft*. Scholastic, 2022.
- Sepetys, Ruta. *You: The Story: A Writer's Guide to Craft Through Memory*. Philomel Books, 2024.

Supplemental

- Ives, Lucy. *three six five: prompts, acts, divinations (an inexhaustible compendium for writing)*. Drawings by Nick Mauss, Siglio Press, 2026.
- The New York Times. *The New York Times*. Web. <<http://www.nytimes.com/>>.
- DeMarco-Barrett, Barbara & Stone, Marrie, hosts. *Writers on Writing*, Apple Podcasts, 2022, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/writers-on-writing/id1637665605>.
- "Writers on Writing."
<https://Archive.Nytimes.Com/Www.Nytimes.Com/Books/Specials/Writers.html>,
archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/specials/writers.html. Accessed 24 June 2026.
- O'Neil, David. "Why the Best Writing Advice is Often the Weirdest," *The New Yorker*, May 20, 2026. Accessed 6/22/26.
- "Homework for Life" from the TedxTalk by Matthew Dicks

- Excerpts from *Tell it Slant* by Brenda Miller and Suzanne Paola
- Narrative Writing from The New York Times
- TED Talk "The Power of Personal Narrative" by J. Christian Jensen
- TED Talk "Pain & Art: Write What You Honestly Know" by Ryan Gattis
- Humans of New York
- Reading Like a Writer - Writer's Moves
- Commenting on Writer's Moves
- Rating Narrative Openings
- Opening Line Peer Feedback Padlet
- Crafting 5 Second Stories
- Reading College Essays and Personal Narratives
- Mentor Text Mad-Libs
- Postcard Fiction
- Dialogue Exercises: Are We Really Still Talking About the Dishes? and Tell Me How You Really Feel
- Dialogue Exercise Formative Assessment
- Log lines
- Story ladders
- Sensory Details to Build Setting and Character
- Characterization and POV: Speed Date Your Main Character and Character Mad Libs
- Review Packets - Food and Film
- Sensory Description Prompts
- Class Padlets:
- Taste and Food Words
- Tasteless Descriptions
- Film/TV Review Criteria
- Food/Restaurant Review Criteria
- Film/TV Show Idea Pitches
- Boring or Awesomely Terrible Film/Show Descriptions

Unit 1 Time Allotment

- Approximately ~12 weeks

UNIT 2

Class Anthology

Unit 2 Goals

Bolded goals denote **primary unit goals*

At the completion of this unit students will:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2.D | Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3 | Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.A | Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.B | Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.C | Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone and outcome (e.g., a sense of mystery, suspense, growth, or resolution). |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.D | Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.E | Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative. |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.5 | Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. |
| CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3 | Analyze the impact of the author's choices |

regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.5 **Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.**
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.6 **Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).**
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Unit 2 Essential Questions

- How can we contribute to the greater collection of the human narrative?
- What is an anthology?
- What are the criteria of a cohesive anthology?
- How do authors select themes for anthologies?
- What is a writer's craft?
- How do writers generate their ideas and craft their pieces?
- What moves and choices can writers make to achieve their purpose and enhance meaning, and how do these moves influence writing and reading of pieces?

Unit 2 Scope and Sequence

The second unit can be introduced during the first unit in order to familiarize students with the upcoming anthology assignment, and to allow them to vote on a theme that represents the interests and needs of the class. During the second half of the first marking period or at the start of the second marking period, students will examine a collection of anthologies to determine the criteria and attributes of the compilation. Students will collectively decide the theme and title of their class anthology by vote. Students will then contribute a short story to their class anthology, working within the established theme. Although sticking to a theme might initially seem confining, it can also be freeing, allowing students the creativity to play with the perceived boundaries of a topic. As an example, past class anthology themes have included food, nostalgia, seasons, and travel. Students working within the idea of travel were not limited to physical travel by plane or distance; students wrote pieces focused on vacation, internal journeys, growth, time travel, and bridging the distance between relationships and ideas. Students continued to learn that once writers know the rules and develop the skills, they can push the boundaries and break them with purpose. Students will then publish their story to a platform that is viewable to other members of their class (Padlet, etc), and will include a short author's biography as well as a comprehensive Author's Note.

- **What is a Short Story? Short Story and/or Film Analysis:** Students may read a series of short stories and/or watch a series of short films and take notes that will help them write a response that answers the prompt: "Based on the short films/short stories, what is a short story? What do these pieces have in common? Think about structure/composition, story arc, point of view, characters, setting, style, plot, time span, etc." Teachers can capture information about individual and class understandings, skills, and interests to inform instruction.
- **Mentor Texts*:** Students will examine how authors write using choices and moves, reading and annotating excerpts about the craft of writing from various published authors. These excerpts will serve as a "master class" on writing, offering students a number of different techniques and ideas to consider and apply to their own writing. Readings and viewings will be assigned throughout the semester at the discretion of the instructor based on the unit, lesson, and skill. Student annotations will be collected & assessed based on text interactions. Students may have the option and opportunity to find and contribute additional readings and excerpts for review. Students will read a series of mentor texts, personal narratives and other creative nonfiction, *as writers* to identify, evaluate, and then practice the writing moves/choices the authors make to advance and tell their stories. The assignment's purpose is to expose students to writing choices and moves, the skills and habits a writer develops and utilizes over time. Students will work to amass a "bag of tricks" to aid in studying their craft. Teachers can capture information about individual and class understandings, skills, and interests to inform instruction. **Students seeking the Honors designation must complete all mentor text annotations.*
- **Anthology draft and final:** Students will write a short story, ensuring that it adheres to the theme of the anthology and requirements of the assignment. Students will make purposeful writing choices and moves within their own pieces to enhance meaning. They employ writing moves/choices related to structure and organization; incorporating sensory experiences and details; adherence to style and genre criteria; authentic dialogue creation; plot and story arc; sentence, tense, and point of view variation; characterization; time span and setting; mood development, etc. all related to the purpose of their piece.

The assignment will assess students' cumulative skills and mechanics over the course. This assignment will be a major part of the marking period grade. Piece must be a minimum of 3 pages and maximum of 6 pages.

- **Introductory biography:** Students will produce a brief introductory paragraph about themselves and their piece that will appear in the anthology. Paragraph introduction should be written in the 3rd person, identifying the author's current status as a writer/student/person and the influences that inspired the piece.
- **Author's Note:** Students will complete an original and comprehensive Author's Note. The student must employ thorough commentary and evidence to: outline the genesis of the piece - from conception, to draft, to revision, to final version - and how specific master class excerpt readings, outside/independent readings, class assignments, lessons, and personal experiences influenced both their process and the final product, explaining choices, intentions, and final outcomes and conclusions; cite both their own writing and outside sources, incorporating excerpts from pieces and readings throughout the semester; and detail how the piece fits into the theme of the anthology.
- **Padlet Commentary:** Students read each other's story submissions, leaving commentary.

Unit 2 Assured Assessments

Teachers will select additional formative activities based on student skills from the following examples or other creative writing activities as suggested by the NCTE or College Board:

Formative Assessments:

- What is an anthology? Activity & response
- What is a short story? Short film or short story analysis
- Anthology Draft
- Padlet commentary on peers' stories
- Mentor text annotations

Teachers can select additional formative activities based on student skills from the following examples or other creative writing activities as suggested by the NCTE or College Board:

Summative Assessment:

- Class Anthology:
 - Final Draft
 - Author Introductory Bio
 - Author's Note

Unit 2 Resources:

Core

- Dicks, Matthew, and Dan Kennedy. *Storyworthy Engage, Teach, Persuade, and Change Your Life through the Power of Storytelling*. New World Library, 2018.
- Kittle, Penny. *Micro Mentor Texts: Using Short Passages from Great Books to Teach Writers Craft*. Scholastic, 2022.
- Sepetys, Ruta. *You: The Story: A Writer's Guide to Craft Through Memory*. Philomel Books, 2024.
- Short stories related to selected class theme

- Collections of anthologies for class review and study

Supplemental

- Ives, Lucy. *three six five: prompts, acts, divinations (an inexhaustible compendium for writing)*. Drawings by Nick Mauss, Siglio Press, 2026.

Animated Short Films:

- ["Hair Love"](#)
- ["The Present"](#)
- ["Piper"](#)
- ["Purl"](#)

Live Action:

- ["Cautionary Tales"](#)
- ["Stutterer"](#)
- ["The Lunch Date"](#)
- ["Hot Dog"](#)
- [Pixar in a Box: Story Structure](#)
- [Learn Plot Diagram Using Disney and Pixar Movie Clips](#)
- [Plot Video 1](#) and [Plot Video 2](#)
- Teacher selected short stories
- Student selected short stories

Unit 2 Time Allotment

- Approximately ~3-4 weeks

UNIT 3

Culminating Writing Portfolio

Unit 3 Goals

Bolded goals denote **primary unit goals*

At the completion of this unit students will:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2 | Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2.C | Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2.D | Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3 | Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.D | Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3.E | Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.5 | Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.6 | Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness or beauty of the text. |
| CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.2 | Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., |

visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

Unit 3 Essential Questions

- What is a portfolio?
- How do writers generate their ideas and craft their pieces?
- What moves and choices can writers make to achieve their purpose and enhance meaning, and how do these moves influence writing and reading of pieces?
- What are the differences between public and private, informal and academic, and nonfiction and fiction writing?
- How can writers reflect on the writing process?
- What is the value and role of the reflection process for writers?
- What are the differences between public and private, informal and academic, and nonfiction and fiction writing?
- How can we contribute to the greater collection of the human narrative?

Unit 3 Scope and Sequence

As the third and final unit and culminating project of the course, students will produce a portfolio of revised work and reflective epilogues that demonstrate their experiences and growth as writers, learners, and thinkers in the course. Students must revisit and revise portions of a required number of writing pieces to continue participating in and following the steps of the writing process. The epilogues, opportunities for a writer to communicate directly and reflectively with readers about their pieces and experiences, allowing them to explain and elaborate on: their process, their choices and craft, revisions, what they have learned and now think, and how they have grown.

Students will work in a digital format (Canva, Google Slides, Google Docs, etc.) following a requirement checklist. The design and content included in the assignment requires students to make writing choices and moves within their own pieces and the portfolio itself to achieve purpose and enhance meaning. Students will reflect on their choices and final pieces.

Students will present their finished portfolio to the instructor in a one-on-one conference setting, offering an authentic audience.

Unit 3 Assured Assessments

Formative Assessment:

- Viewing and reflecting on sample student portfolios

Teachers will select additional formative activities based on student skills from the following examples or other creative writing activities as suggested by the NCTE or College Board.

Summative Assessment:

- Culminating portfolio

Teachers will select additional formative activities based on student skills from the following examples or other creative writing activities as suggested by the NCTE or College Board.

Unit 3 Resources

Core

- Dicks, Matthew, and Dan Kennedy. *Storyworthy Engage, Teach, Persuade, and Change Your Life through the Power of Storytelling*. New World Library, 2018.
- Kittle, Penny. *Micro Mentor Texts: Using Short Passages from Great Books to Teach Writers Craft*. Scholastic, 2022.
- Sepetys, Ruta. *You: The Story: A Writer's Guide to Craft Through Memory*. Philomel Books, 2024.
- Sample student portfolios
- Google Slides/Canva/ or similar digital platform

Supplemental

- Ives, Lucy. *three six five: prompts, acts, divinations (an inexhaustible compendium for writing)*. Drawings by Nick Mauss, Siglio Press, 2026.

Unit 3 Time Allotment

- Approximately ~3-4 weeks

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

The following is a list of Academic Language terms that will be used in the course:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| ● dialogue | ● paragraphing |
| ● hero's journey | ● imagery |
| ● simile | ● pacing |
| ● metaphor | ● stakes (elephants, backpacks, hourglasses, breadcrumbs, crystal balls) |
| ● symbol | ● point of view |
| ● allusion | ● narrator |
| ● mood | ● narrative modes/methods of development |
| ● tone | ● dialogue tag |
| ● verb tense | ● sitcom code (teaser, trouble, muddle, triumph/failure, kicker) |
| ● mentor text | ● storylines |
| ● anthology | |
| ● portfolio | |

- characterization
- setting
- plot structure
- annotation
- essential question
- evidence
- commentary
- narrative
- fiction
- nonfiction
- portfolio
- anthology
- scene
- act
- major/minor character
- turning point/climax

CURRENT REFERENCES

Dicks, Matthew, and Dan Kennedy. *Storyworthy Engage, Teach, Persuade, and Change Your Life through the Power of Storytelling*. New World Library, 2018.

Kittle, Penny. *Micro Mentor Texts: Using Short Passages from Great Books to Teach Writers Craft*. Scholastic, 2022.

Sepetys, Ruta. *You: The Story: A Writer's Guide to Craft Through Memory*. Philomel Books, 2024.

Snap Judgment. Web. <<http://snapjudgment.org/>>. NPR's spoken word podcast. Audio and video performances which will inspire.

“The Art and Craft of Storytelling.” The Moth, www.themoth.org/.

TED: Ideas worth Spreading. Web. <<http://www.ted.com/>>. Thought-provoking videos covering a variety of topics.

The New York Times. The New York Times. Web. <<http://www.nytimes.com/>>. A great source for high quality nonfiction.

ASSURED STUDENT PERFORMANCE RUBRICS

- [Vision of the Graduate Skill and Distribution Rubrics](#)
- [Short Story Rubric](#)
- [Class Anthology Rubric](#)
- [Author's Note Rubric](#)
- [Culminating Anthology Rubric](#)

**CLICK [HERE](#) FOR GRADES 9-12 VOG RUBRICS AND FEEDBACK
FORMS CREATED BY
THE DISTRICT VOG COMMITTEE**

TPS Vision of a Graduate



Critical Thinking & Problem Solving

The ability to use knowledge, facts, and data to effectively solve problems.

Innovation

The ability to look at something familiar and see new possibilities, which leads to curiosity about new learning and the desire to create something original or imaginative.

Communication

The ability to understand others and be understood for a variety of reasons and purposes.

Growth Mindset

The belief that one can improve their intelligence or skills through continued hard work and adapt when faced with challenges.

Collaboration

The qualities and competencies we use to collectively make progress toward common goals or outcomes.

Emotional Intelligence

The aptitude for identifying how and why a person is feeling the way they are and how to regulate and address those emotions.

Self-Efficacy

The belief that you are capable of successfully performing a task or managing a situation.

Integrity

The act of consistently doing the right thing even when it's hard or no one is looking.

Approved May 2022

Writing History

The goal of this assignment is for you to thoroughly consider and discuss your experiences with writing and creativity over the course of your life. Introduce yourself as a student, writer*, and creator with honesty, details, and reflection.

Early years (preschool/early elementary school years):

- What are your **first memories** of and experiences with writing and creativity? (any/all imaginative play, art, creative/exploratory activities you engaged in as a kid, assignments, learning how to write, etc.) How did you define creativity then? **EXPLAIN.**

Upper elementary/middle school years:

- What was writing and creativity like for you then? **EXPLAIN.**
 - Include **memories of and experiences** with writing and creativity (school-based writing, letters you wrote, creative assignments, successes, frustrations, or see above.)

High school years:

- What has writing and creativity been like the last few years, and what is it currently like for you as a senior? **EXPLAIN.**
 - Include **memories of and experiences** with writing and creativity (school-based writing, creative assignments, successful or difficult pieces, teachers or classes that have helped you with writing most, or see above.)

Now:

- As you enter this class:
 - Do you consider yourself to be a writer?
 - Do you consider yourself creative? How do you define creativity and how did that definition develop?
- Why did you sign up for this class? (be honest)
- What was your last English class or class involving writing? How did it go?
- What was the last creative thing (assignment, writing, activity) you did?
- What do you like to or tend to write, or, what **WOULD** you like to write if you had a choice (which you do now)? Think genre, style, topics, perspective, form, etc.
- What do you struggle with most when it comes to writing?
- What helps you the most when it comes to writing?
- Which types of stories do you enjoy reading (or watching) and/or which authors' writing do you admire?
- What two writing goals do you have for yourself for this semester? (*I will learn to write authentic, believable dialogue... I want to write about NEW topics like...*)

*It's completely fine if you don't consider yourself a "writer" or if you're unsure of what type of writer you want to be. Just explain your thinking, your reservations/excitements, and your plans for the class.

Class Anthology - Creative Piece Skill Demonstration

- Students will contribute one finished piece to a whole-class anthology, demonstrating skills developed throughout the course & as a result of interacting with mentor texts.
- The class will collectively determine the theme and title of the anthology.
- Students will self-select the genre and style of their piece, ensuring that it adheres to the theme of the anthology and requirements of the assignment.
- Piece must be a minimum of 3 pages or the equivalent for selected genres.
- *ACP students will submit one finished piece to the anthology.

Class Anthology - Author Biography

- Students will produce a brief introductory paragraph about themselves and their piece that will appear in the anthology.
- Paragraph introduction should be written in the 3rd person, identifying the author's current status as a writer/student/person and the influences that inspired the piece.

Class Anthology: Author's Note

An author's note is an opportunity for a writer to communicate directly with their readers about their writing and experiences. In it, a writer explains and elaborates on their writing processes, choices and craft, revisions, what they have learned and now realize as a writer and about their piece, and how they have grown throughout the semester.

- Students will complete an original and comprehensive Author's Note. The student must employ thorough commentary and evidence to:
- outline the genesis of the project throughout the semester - from conception, to draft, to revision, to final version - and how specific master class excerpt readings, outside/independent readings, class assignments, lessons, and personal experiences influenced both their process and the final product, explaining choices, intentions, and final outcomes and conclusions.
- cite both their own writing and outside sources, incorporating excerpts from pieces and readings throughout the semester.
- detail how the piece fits into the theme of the anthology.
- address the following Guiding Questions (to be assigned/rephrased/revised at teacher discretion): How did you decide upon your chosen content to use as a vehicle to represent your learning from the writing mentors? How did you employ the criteria, choices, structure? How did X specific reading/research/ skill/assignment influence your writing? What specific revisions and/or additions did you make and why? How successful were you?

Culminating Creative Writing Portfolio Criteria

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 **Create a creative cover / title page** for your portfolio designed to reflect its contents and/or yourself as a writer.

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 **~2 quoted portions of the text**

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Create Your Own Children's Books

You may work with up to two other people, but everyone must be productive and contribute equally.

You MUST:

- create a children's book that, based on our presentations, your own research, and your reading of other children's books, "fills a gap," "addresses a need or specific audience," or "follows a trend" within the children's book genre.
- organize and populate the entire TEXT of the book into the Canva.
- answer the question on the final page of the project, citing specific elements and choices from your text.
- write the FULL text of your story.
- illustrate and design the book's cover and an additional three pages (the rest can remain blank with text)*

*If you are interested in extra credit, completely illustrate and design the book in its entirety.

QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU BRAINSTORM AND PLAN:

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

- ☐ How can/will children's books support children born and growing up in the 2020s?
- ☐ What types of reading experiences, lessons, visuals, conflicts, characters, cultures, content, etc. will children born and growing up within the 2020s decade need? Why?
- ☐ Are you taking inspiration from other children's stories, movies, shows, books, etc.?
- ☐ What's something you learned during the research process that you can incorporate into your children's book?
- ☐ What will make your children's book stand out?
- ☐ What is a children's book YOU needed as a child?

SUBJECT MATTER, PURPOSE, & TARGET AUDIENCE:

- ☐ Are you taking inspiration from other children's stories, movies, shows, books, etc.?
- ☐ What is the subject/topic(s) of the book?
- ☐ What is the book's purpose? (to...)
- ☐ What are the takeaway messages (themes or lessons) of the text? (that...)
- ☐ Who is the target age range for this book? Why?
- ☐ How do the subject/topic(s) and messages(s) connect to the target age range for this book?

COVER & TITLE:

- ☐ What will readers be able to infer about the subject matter of the book based on the title and cover?
- ☐ What is your working title? How will it relate to the subject matter/target audience/plot?
- ☐ What kind of text and images would be appropriate on the cover?

IMAGES & VISUALS:

- ☐ What is the primary medium (collage, drawings, photographs, etc.) used in the illustrations? How will you use them? What will be the impact(s)?

Consider:

- color choices
 - arrangement of images on the page(s)
 - scale (sizing)
 - amount of illustrations v. amount of text
- ☐ Will there be one image or illustrative choice that is repeated throughout? Why?
 - ☐ How do the images throughout the book support the subject matter of the book or message that you've identified? Explain.

TEXT:

- ☐ How will you organize the text?

Consider:

- page setup and design
 - if certain words stand out particular words
 - amount of words v. illustrations
 - font size
 - shapes
 - colors
 - spacing
 - organization
- ☐ Is there one word, or groups of words, that is repeated throughout? Why might this be?
 - ☐ How does the text throughout the book support the subject matter of the book or message?

CHARACTERS:

- ☐ How will you represent the characters (human, human-like, objects, animals, nature, supernatural, etc.)? Why?
- ☐ Who is the main character(s)?
- ☐ What are their main traits?
- ☐ How does the main character and their traits support the subject and message of the book?
- ☐ Who are the minor characters?
- ☐ What are their main traits?

- ☐ How do the minor characters and their traits support the subject and message of the book?

PLOT & CONFLICT:

- ☐ How will you organize your story?
- ☐ How will your plot engage young readers?
- ☐ How will your plot illuminate important aspects of your topic/subject/message?
- ☐ What are the conflicts (major/minor, internal/external) that drive the plot?
- ☐ Does the conflict get resolved?
- ☐ How does the conflict(s) connect to the issues that most children face?

Lore Drop

“Suddenly everything looks different...”

We’ve all experienced moments where one piece of information completely alters how we see something. With sudden context, a message, or an admission, our perception shifts and suddenly we have a whole new understanding of the situation and individuals involved.

By now, you are all aware that the special occasion, tradition, or holiday magic was produced by your parents, not Santa, the Easter Bunny, or the Tooth Fairy. Once the initial shock and anger of betrayal dissipated - how *could* your parents *lie* to you?! - you might have contemplated the logistics of the whole charade and concluded that your parents are capable of covert midnight operations as well as deception. You can’t unlearn this knowledge: all of your memories, as well as how you see your parents both now and in the future, have been forever changed.

A **lore drop**, a term originating from the gaming community, is **when a writer shares background information that illuminates the context of a situation or character making it richer and more complicated**. This sudden, dramatic disclosure turns an ordinary moment into an epiphanic revelation. It can include history, secrets, scandal, or trauma, and the new piece of information alters everything, with effects ranging from serious and dramatic to reassuring or humorous.

Your task is to craft a short story of 2-4 pages that hinges upon a lore drop.

1. This narrative can be completely fictional, or as autobiographical as you wish.
2. Your narrative must include dialogue.
3. You must establish clear before, during, and after periods.
4. Your narrative must include an exploration or commentary on humanity and/or society, offering a thought-provoking message.

Some ways to execute the lore drop:

- Dramatic dialogue
- Flashbacks
- Environmental discovery (of an object or item)
- Received note, letter, message, or mission briefing
- An admission or revelation

We will look at at least two different examples of lore drops in class. You should use the questions on the next page to start thinking about your story.

 Lore Drop Initial Brainstorming
Work on this in your class notebook

1. Who is your main character BEFORE the lore drop?
2. What is the lore that you are dropping? In other words, what is your reader unaware of about the character or situation when your story begins?
3. How is the lore dropped? How does the character discover this information?
4. How is your main character impacted DURING the lore drop?
5. Who is your main character AFTER the lore drops?
6. Are other characters involved? If so, what does their presence add to the story?
7. When will readers enter the story? At the beginning, deep in the trenches, or closer to the end? (the hero's journey never really goes away)
8. What do you want readers to walk away with at the end of the story? What do you want your commentary on humanity and/or society to be?

OTHER RESOURCES

The New York Times. The New York Times. Web. <<http://www.nytimes.com/>>. A great source for high quality nonfiction.

"The Online Writing Lab at Purdue (OWL)." Web. <<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/>>. Online resource for all MLA related questions.

Creative Writing Portfolio

Our final assignment in Creative Writing is your culminating project for the semester. You will create a **Creative Writing Portfolio** and an accompanying **Author's Note** to showcase your growth as a writer and demonstrate your skills, learning, and writing voice.

ACADEMIC HONESTY & PLAGIARISM WARNING

Your work must be your OWN - your own topic, thoughts, questions, planning, stylistic choices, writing, source collection, and compilation. (Not your friend's, not an online plagiarism tool's, not ChatGPT/AI's, not Grammarly's, not your sibling's, parent's, or family member's, etc. ideas or work.)

Use your notes, source material that you researched to support your own thinking, and our previous assignments and instruction to develop your work.

If you are suspected of plagiarizing (using non-approved sources, repurposing others' work or ideas, using plagiarism/AI tools, allowing others to complete your work for you, etc.), you will earn a zero on the assignment **without a chance to rewrite and referral based on the **THS plagiarism policy**.**

Create and Design Your Creative Writing Portfolio

Goal: Show your growth and development as a writer in a visually appealing way.

Step 1: Review all writing from the semester in Google Classroom, Google Drive, Canva, Padlet, and your Writer's Notebook.

Step 2: Revise portions that could be improved based on rubrics, feedback, your growth and learning.

Step 3: Arrange work according to the provided [portfolio criteria handout](#) in a **creative presentation format of your choice** (Canva, Google Slides, Google Docs, etc.). Take snapshots, screenshots, and type in excerpts of your work. Create titled links and adjust viewer permissions. Reflect on your work to show your growth, highlighting craft choices, improvements, and your journey as a writer. Think of your portfolio as a scrapbook or an album of carefully curated excerpts and snapshots of your creative writing **journey**.

In-Class Work Days and Individual Conferences Dates*:

5/18-6/2, Four conference timeslots per period

FINAL DUE DATE (NO WIGGLE ROOM AT ALL): 6/3 @ 7:30 am

*The earlier you finish the Portfolio, the earlier you can conference with me and the sooner your work can be assessed.

[Period 2 conference sign-up sheet](#)

[Period 7 conference sign-up sheet](#)

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