Curriculum Framework

Course Title: Creative writing

Board Approval Date: October 14, 2026

Credit / Hours: 0.5

Course Description:

Introduction to creative writing is an honors-level semester course designed for students in grades 11-12 who want to explore writing as a creative practice and an intentional craft. Built on the belief that creative writing opens the floodgates to all writing, the course emphasizes curiosity, observation, experimentation, revision, and publication within a collaborative studio environment. Students will engage in an authentic writing process that mirrors the work of practicing authors. Through mentor texts, daily writing, peer workshops, conferences, reflection, and purposeful revision, students explore multiple genres while developing transferable craft skills including voice, characterization, imagery, dialogue, structure, pacing, symbolism, and theme. The course culminates in a digital Author Portfolio that showcases polished writing, evidence of revision, author reflections, and personal growth.

Learning Activities / Modes of Assessment:

Routine assessment
Daily Studio journal entries
Observation notebook checks
Craft conferences
Mini write
Peer workshop participation and feedback
Craft analysis of mentor text(s)
Craft Ladder Checkpoint
Gallery walk

AI Assessment
Ethical AI documentation log
HCAI reflection

Signature Assessment
Portfolio Assessment

Unit Reflection

Instructional Resources:

Reference texts
Hummel & Lenox, *Short Form Creative Writing*
Stephen King, *On Writing* (selected excerpts)

Classic and contemporary mentor texts
Annie Dillard George Orwell Ross Gay

Aimee Nezhukumatathil
Sandra Cisneros
Shirley Jackson
Jamaica Kincaid
Ray Bradbury
Ken Liu
Flannery O'Connor
Jeannette Walls
Michelle Zauner
David Sedaris
Rebecca Solnit
Robin Wall Kimmerer
Mary Oliver
Ocean Vuong
Ada Limón
Ted Chiang

Multimedia resources

Author interviews
Spoken word performances
Podcasts
Photography
Visual art
Local history archives
Maps
Audio recordings
Short documentary films
Student-selected mentor texts

Technology resources

Google Workspace
Google Sites
Google Classroom
HC-AI tools (district approved)
Digital writing and publishing platforms

Unit 0 Becoming a Writer	
Time Frame	Two days
Student Learning Outcomes	The student will: ● Participate respectfully in workshop discussions. ● Distinguish ethical from unethical AI use. ● Maintain a Studio Journal. ● Explain the purpose of revision. ● Establish personal writing goals. ● Contribute positively to a writing community.
Essential Questions	● Why do writers have responsibilities to themselves, their readers, and one another?
Content	● Course expectations and studio culture ● Academic integrity ● Ethical AI use ● Copyright and intellectual property ● Collaboration vs. plagiarism ● Digital citizenship ● Creative responsibility ● Goal setting
Assessments	**Routine Assessments** ● Studio Journal ● Daily Invitations ● Discussion Participation **AI Assessment** ● Academic Integrity & Human-Centered AI Quiz **Signature Assessment** ● Dear Future Author Letter **Portfolio Assessment**

	• Writer's Website Setup Academic integrity quiz	
Standards	CC.1.4.11-12 A Informational reading CC.1.4.11-12: M - R Narrative writing CC.1.5.11-12: A, B, D, G Speaking and listening	
Key Vocabulary	Academic/Concept Vocabulary Studio cycle, academic integrity, revision, reflection, workshop, feedback, audience, voice, authorship, Human-Centered AI, portfolio, draft	Literary Terms Copyright, in-text citation, intellectual property, mosaic, plagiarism, paraphrase, direct plagiarism, quotation, self-plagiarism, summary, sloppy scholarship, unauthorized aid, works cited, Gemini & Chat GPT, AI statement
Materials/ Resources	Course syllabus Academic Integrity Presentation Quizlet Kahoot Studio Journals Classroom policies and procedures AI guidelines Sample scenarios	

Unit 1 Notice	
Time Frame	Two weeks
Student Learning Outcomes	The student will: • Develop habits of close observation through sustained attention to people, places, objects, images, and experiences. • Record specific sensory and concrete details in an observation notebook. • Distinguish between general description and precise, purposeful detail.

	• Analyze how mentor writers use craft to direct a reader's attention. • Experiment with imagery, diction, specificity, sentence structure, and selection of detail. • Transform observations into original creative writing. • Explain how craft choices influence meaning and the reader's experience. • Revise writing using feedback, reflection, mentor texts, and craft analysis. • Evaluate feedback and make independent revision decisions. • Use HC-AI as a thinking partner while maintaining creative ownership and individual voice
Essential Questions	• How do writers learn to see what others overlook?
Content	Close observation Sensory awareness and specificity and concrete detail Selection of significant detail Showing versus telling & imagery Precise diction Sentence-level craft Audience awareness Observation as a source of creative writing Mentor-text analysis Creative experimentation Revision and reflection HC-AI as a tool for noticing and analysis
Assessments	**Routine assessment** Daily Studio journal entries Observation notebook checks Craft conferences Mini write Peer workshop participation and feedback Craft analysis of mentor text(s) Craft Ladder Checkpoint Gallery walk **AI assessment** Revision decision log - accept/reject

	Signature assessments The Art of Noticing Portfolio Entry **Portfolio assessment** Writer's Website Bio/Auto-bio section Unit one reflection	
Standards	CC.1.2.11-12 C, D, E Informational reading CC1.3. 11-12 C-F & I-K Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12 A-F & H-I Informational writing CC.1.4.11-12 M-V, X Narrative writing CC.1.5.11-12 A-B; D-G Speaking and listening	
Key Vocabulary	Academic/Concept VocabularyObservation Specificity, sensory and concrete detail, craft, mentor text, audience, purpose, draft, revision, reflection, feedback, workshop, craft analysis, authorial choice, creative process, studio cycle, HC-AI, accept/reject decision, authorship	Literary Terms Imagery, diction, connotation, denotation, figurative language, simile, metaphor, personification, tone, mood, voice, syntax, repetition, contrast, juxtaposition, detail selection, showing vs. telling
Materials/ Resources	**Anchor texts:** Annie Dillard - "Seeing" George Orwell - "A Hanging" Ross Gay - excerpt from *The Book of Delights* Aimee Nezhukumatathil- "The Ribbon Eel" from *World of Wonders* Supplemental texts (excerpts only) Gary Soto - "The Pie" Naomi Shihab Nye - "Valentine for Ernest Mann" Raymond Carver - "Cathedral" Mary Oliver - "The Summer Day" Other media Brandon Stanton - "Humans of New York"	

	Paintings, street art, nature photography, etc

Unit 2 Imagine	
Time Frame	Two weeks
Student Learning Outcomes	The student will: ● Generate multiple original story ideas from observations, memories, questions, and "What if?" scenarios. ● Develop believable characters through action, dialogue, and detail. ● Establish conflict that creates curiosity and momentum. ● Control point of view intentionally. ● Write purposeful dialogue that reveals character or advances the story. ● Experiment with narrative structure and pacing. ● Revise writing using peer feedback, conferences, mentor texts, and self-reflection. ● Evaluate feedback and make independent revision decisions. ● Explain how specific craft choices shape a reader's experience. ● Use HC-AI ethically to generate possibilities while maintaining authorship.
Essential Questions	● How do writers transform ordinary ideas into unforgettable stories?
Content	● Idea generation and creative possibility ● Character development ● Conflict and tension ● Purposeful dialogue, voice, and point of view ● Narrative structure, beginnings and endings ● Narrative pacing ● Economy and precision of language ● Flash fiction ● Audience experience ● Mentor-text analysis ● Revision and reflection ● HC-AI for brainstorming, questioning, and comparison

Assessments	Routine assessment Daily Studio journal entries Observation notebook checks Craft conferences Mini write Peer workshop participation and feedback Craft analysis of mentor text(s) Craft Ladder Checkpoint Gallery walk Flash Fiction Exchange and Reflection Writing AI assessment Revision decision log - accept/reject Signature assessment: Story Seeds Portfolio assessment Writer's Website Imagine Collection	
Standards	CC.1.2.11-12.A-B, D, G Information reading CC1.3.11-12.A-F & I-K Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12. A-F Informative writing CC.1.4.11-12. M-R, U, X Narrative writing CC.1.5.11-12.A-G Speaking and listening	
Key Vocabulary	Academic/Concept Vocabulary Story seed, possibility, "What if?" brainstorming, flash fiction, drafting, creative experimentation, craft choice, authorial intent, audience, reader experience, mentor text, peer workshop, feedback, revision, reflection, economy of language, story development, authorship	Literary Terms Character, characterization, protagonist, antagonist, conflict, internal & external conflict, dialogue, voice, POV, 1st POV, 3rd limited POV, 3rd omniscient POV, narrator, setting, scene, plot, exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, tension, pacing, foreshadowing, flashback, in medias res, narrative arc, Freytag's Pyramid

Materials/ Resources	Anchor texts Sandra Cisneros - "Eleven" Shirley Jackson - "The Lottery" Jamaica Kincaid - "Girl" Supplemental texts Ted Chiang - "Exhalation" Karen Russell - "The Barn at the End of our Term" Lydia Davis selected flash fiction collection Ernest Hemingway's six words Etgar Keret - "Crazy Glue" *Flash Fiction Online* *Smoke Long Quarterly* Craft readings Stephen King - *On Writing* excerpt Anne Lamont - "Shitty First Drafts" Other media *Pixar Short Films*

Unit 3 Design	
Time Frame	2 weeks
Student Learning Outcomes	The student will: ● Analyze how structure influences meaning and the reader's experience. ● Organize scenes and events intentionally to create tension, discovery, emotional impact, or meaning. ● Control narrative time and pacing by slowing, accelerating, compressing, pausing, or shifting time. ● Craft purposeful openings that establish expectations and engage readers. ● Craft endings that create closure, resonance, discovery, ambiguity, or continued thought.

	• Develop theme through character, conflict, imagery, detail, and consequence rather than directly stating a message. • Use symbolism, motif, and repeated imagery intentionally to develop meaning. • Analyze mentor texts to determine how writers use structural and craft choices to shape reader experience. • Make substantial revisions involving structure, pacing, language, and meaning. • Explain and defend intentional craft and revision decisions using evidence from their own writing. • Use Human-Centered AI to identify patterns and analyze possibilities while retaining authority over meaning, structure, and final creative decisions.
Essential Questions	• How do writers shape meaning through intentional choices?
Content	• Intentional story design • Narrative structure & time • Scene construction and sequencing • Pacing and compression • Openings and endings • Symbolism, motif, and repeated imagery • Theme and meaning • Subtext • Structural patterns • Audience experience • Authorial intent • Revision as redesign • Mentor-text analysis • Craft-based feedback and conferencing • HC-AI for pattern recognition and structural analysis
Assessments	**Routine assessments** Daily Studio journal entries Observation notebook checks Craft conferences Mini writes Peer workshop participation and feedback Craft analysis of mentor text(s)

	Craft Ladder Checkpoint **AI assessment:** Revision decision log - accept/reject **Signature assessment:** Designed for Meaning: An Intentional Story **Portfolio assessment** Writer's Website - Design Edition	
Standards	CC.1.2.11-12 C, D, E Informational reading CC1.3. 11-12 C-F & I-K Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12 A-F & H-I Informational writing CC.1.4.11-12 M-V, X Narrative writing CC.1.5.11-12 A-B; D-G Speaking and listening	
Key Vocabulary	Academic/Concept Vocabulary Intentionality, design, structure, sequence, structural choice, craft decision, authorial intent, reader experience, narrative time & pacing, compression & expansion, pattern recognition, craft artifact, blueprint, revision, mentor text, craft conference, audience, reflection, authorship	Literary Terms Narrative structure, chronology, linear narrative Nonlinear narrative, scene, summary, flashback & flash-forward, in medias res, pacing, tension, foreshadowing, juxtaposition, symbol, ,motif, theme, subtext, irony (dramatic, situational, and verbal), ambiguity, narrative arc, turning point, resolution, open ending, circular structure, frame narrative
Materials/ Resources	Anchor texts Ray Bradbury - "The Pedestrian" and "A Sound of Thunder" Ken Liu - "The Paper Menagerie" James Hurst - "The Scarlet Ibis" Flannery O'Connor - "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" and "Good Country People" Supplemental texts Kate Chopin - "The Story of an Hour" Jhumpa Lahiri - "Interpreter of Maladies" Karen Russell - "St. Lucy's Home for Girls Raised by Wolves"	

	Craft conversations Steven King - On Writing interview Anne Lamott and Neil Gaiman interview

Unit 4 Remember	
Time Frame	Two weeks
Student Learning Outcomes	The student will: ● Generate possible writing material from memories, artifacts, photographs, places, relationships, sensory experiences, and interviews. ● Select significant memories and examine why particular moments remain meaningful. ● Transform remembered experiences into crafted narratives rather than simple chronological retellings. ● Develop an authentic narrative voice appropriate to personal writing. ● Blend scene, summary, and reflection to create meaning. ● Structure memoir using purposeful narrative arcs, timelines, perspectives, and/or braided forms. ● Examine how memory, perspective, and time influence the way an experience is understood and represented. ● Compare multiple perspectives of a shared experience and recognize that memory is subjective. ● Develop themes through specific moments, images, relationships, patterns, and reflection rather than directly stating lessons. ● Write about personal experiences with honesty, specificity, and audience awareness. ● Revise memoir writing to strengthen voice, structure, meaning, and reader experience. ● Use Human-Centered AI as an organizational and questioning tool while maintaining ownership of memory, interpretation, and meaning.
Essential Questions	How do memories become a story?
Content	● Memory as source material & perspective, identity, place and beginning, significant moments and turning point, memoir, personal narrative, scene and summary, reflection, authentic voice, narrative distance and arc, chronology and nonlinear structure, braided narrative, multiple timelines and perspectives, artifacts as memory triggers, interviewing and perspective comparison, theme and meaning-making, audience awareness

	and boundaries, revision of personal writing, HCAI for questioning, organization, and pattern recognition	
Assessments	**Routine assessments** Daily Studio journal entries Observation notebook checks Craft conferences Mini writes Peer workshop participation and feedback Craft analysis of mentor text(s) Gallery walk Craft ladder checkpoint **AI assessment** Revision decision log - accept/reject **Signature assessment** Memory: Stories We Carry **Portfolio assessment** Author's website: Remember Edition	
Standards	CC.1.2.11-12.A-B, D, E, G, K, L -Information reading CC1.3.11-12.A-F & H-K Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12. A-F & K-L Informative writing CC.1.4.11-12. M-X Narrative writing CC.1.5.11-12.A-G Speaking and listening	
Key Vocabulary	Academic/Concept Vocabulary Memory, perspective, identity, reflection, interpretation, meaning-making, authenticity, vulnerabilities, boundaries, audience, artifact, memory spark, interview, oral history, perspective, comparison, narrative distance, scene, summaries, storytelling, authorial choice, craft decision, revision, reflection, curation, authorship	Literary Terms Memoir, personal narrative, vignette, narrative voice, narrator, point of view, perspective, scene, summary, reflection, dialogue, characterization, setting, sensory imagery, flashback, flash-forward, chronology, nonlinear & braided narrative, parallel structure, narrative arc, turning point, motif, symbolism, theme, subtext, juxtaposition, tone, narrative distance

Materials/ Resources	Anchor texts Jeannette Walls - excerpt from *The Glass Castle* Michelle Zauner - excerpt from *Crying in H Mart* David Sedaris - various short stories Supplementals Ross Gay - *The Book of Delights* - various essays Brian Doyle - "The Wet Engine" *The Electric Typewriter* memoirs Other media Family photos Recipes Postcards Childhood memorabilia Maps Keepsakes

Unit 5 Wander	
Time Frame	Two weeks
Student Learning Outcomes	The student will: ● Observe and document places through field notes, sensory details, photographs, sound, maps, interviews, and other forms of inquiry. ● Explore familiar and unfamiliar places with curiosity and attention. ● Develop a strong sense of place through specific, purposeful details. ● Analyze how place influences identity, culture, memory, relationships, and belonging. ● Integrate observation and reflection to move beyond description toward meaning. ● Use physical or conceptual movement to structure a narrative. ● Create atmosphere through imagery, sensory detail, diction, pacing, and selection of detail. ● Conduct focused research to deepen understanding of a place, community, history, or culture. ● Integrate researched information naturally into creative nonfiction without overwhelming the narrative voice.

	• Evaluate sources and verify information gathered through digital tools and AI. • Consider multiple perspectives when representing places, communities, cultures, and people. • Revise place-based writing to strengthen atmosphere, structure, meaning, and audience experience. • Use HC-AI and digital tools to support research and organization while retaining responsibility for observation, interpretation, verification, and meaning.
Essential Questions	• How does moving through the world shape the stories we tell?
Content	• Place as source material • Sense of place • Journey and movement • Field observation • Field journaling • Curiosity and inquiry • Nature writing • Travel and place-based writing • Culture and community • Identity and belonging • Atmosphere • Observation and reflection • Movement as narrative structure • Research in creative nonfiction • Local history and community stories • Interviews and oral histories • Maps and spatial storytelling • Multiple perspectives • Responsible representation • Source evaluation and verification • Integration of research and narrative • Human-Centered AI for organizing research and verification
Assessments	**Routine assessment** Daily Studio journal entries Observation notebook checks Craft conferences

	Mini writes Peer workshop participation and feedback Craft analysis of mentor text(s) Gallery walk Craft ladder checkpoint Field journals and other wander writings Audio recording or interview responsive writing **AI assessment:** Revision decision log - accept/reject **Signature assessment** No Passport Required Field Journal: Finding Extraordinary Stories Close to Home **Portfolio assessment** Author's Portfolio Community story map	
Standards	CC.1.2.11-12 A- E Informational reading CC1.3. 11-12 A-F & H- Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12 A-F Informational writing CC.1.4.11-12 M-X Narrative writing CC.1.5.11-12 A-G Speaking and listening	
Key Vocabulary	Academic/Concept Vocabulary Wander, place, journey, curiosity, inquiry, field observation, journal, & notes, research, primary & secondary , source credibility, verification, corroboration, interview, oral history, local history, community, culture, belonging, perspective, representation, context, research integration, curation, audience, authorship	Literary Terms Sense of place, setting, atmosphere, mood, imagery, diction, voice, tone, perspective, narrator, scene, reflection, description, anecdote, vignette, narrative arc, chronology, organization, juxtaposition, motif, symbolism, theme, allusion, anecdotal evidence, narrative nonfiction, creative nonfiction

Materials/ Resources	Anchor texts John McPhee - excerpt from *Annals of the World* Rebecca Solnit - excerpt from *Wanderlust* & *A Field Guide to Getting Lost* Aimee Nezhukumatathil- excerpt from *World of Wonders* Supplementals Leslie Jamison - "The Layover" Barry Lopez - excerpts from *Embrace Fearlessly the Burning World* Robin Wall Kimmerer - excerpt from *Braiding Sweetgrass* and other selections Pico Iyer - excerpt from *Sun After Dark* Hanif Abdurraqib - excerpts from place as music and culture Other media Walking photography project Audio soundscapes from different locations Maps - historical and personal Short travel documentary clips Local history archives Public art/murals - photos Neighborhood interviews Field journals

Unit 6 Wonder	
Time Frame	Two weeks
Student Learning Outcomes	The student will: ● Generate compelling questions from observations, experiences, objects, images, ideas, and uncertainties. ● Distinguish between questions that invite exploration and questions that lead primarily to simple or factual answers. ● Explore mystery, curiosity, awe, uncertainty, imagination, and discovery through creative writing. ● Develop abstract ideas through concrete images, objects, experiences, and sensory details. ● Use metaphor and symbolism intentionally to explore complex ideas. ● Experiment with form to discover how structure can influence meaning.

	• Use ambiguity purposefully while maintaining enough clarity for an audience to remain engaged. • Examine multiple interpretations or possibilities without forcing a single conclusion. • Analyze how mentor writers use imagery, metaphor, symbolism, form, and unanswered questions to create wonder. • Revise writing by returning to the central question and evaluating whether the piece continues to explore it. • Consider counterarguments and alternative perspectives as tools for deepening inquiry. • Use Human-Centered AI to generate questions or alternative perspectives while retaining responsibility for interpretation, meaning, and creative decisions. • Reflect on how curiosity and uncertainty can contribute to growth as a writer and thinker.
Essential Questions	• What questions are worth writing about?
Content	• Curiosity as a writing practice • Inquiry and questioning • Mystery and uncertainty • Awe and discovery • Philosophical questions • Open-ended inquiry • Concrete and abstract thinking • Metaphor • Symbolism • Image as meaning • Ambiguity • Experimental form • Poetry and poetic prose • Connections between objects and ideas • Multiple interpretations • Counterarguments and alternative perspectives • Writing without predetermined answers • Revision through inquiry • Audience and clarity • Human-Centered AI as a questioning and perspective-building tool
Assessments	**Routine assessment** Daily Studio journal entries

	Observation notebook checks Craft conferences Mini writes Peer workshop participation and feedback Craft analysis of mentor text(s) Gallery walk Craft Ladder Checkpoint Question wall **AI assessment** Answer one philosophical question and explanation of counterargument chosen *journal activity **Signature assessment** The Question Project: **Portfolio assessment** Author's Portfolio Studio Cycle applied throughout the unit	
Standards	CC.1.2.11-12 A- E Informational reading CC1.3. 11-12 A-F & H- Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12 A-F Informational writing CC.1.4.11-12 M-X Narrative writing CC.1.5.11-12 A-G Speaking and listening	
Key Vocabulary	Academic/Concept Vocabulary Inquiry, curiosity, wonder, awe, mystery, uncertainty, discovery, possibility, interpretation, perspective, philosophical question, open-ended question, counterargument, complexity, ambiguity, abstract, concrete, association, exploration experimentation, meaning, audience, authorship	Literary Terms Extended metaphor, symbolism, imagery, motif, diction, tone, voice, form, structure, line, stanza, free verse, prose poetry, repetition, juxtaposition, allusion, personification, paradox, ambiguity, connotation, denotation, theme, image, figurative language

Materials/ Resources	Anchor texts Mary Oliver - various poems Ross Gay - excerpts from *The Book of Delights* Aimee Nezhukumatathil - various poems Supplementals Ada Limon various poems Ocean Vuong - excerpt from *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* & various poems Tracy K. Smith various https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/tracy-k-smith Jane Hirshfield various poems Other media NASA photography Microscopic photography Timelapse videos Spoken word performances Music with no lyrics Museum objects Scientific illustrations Cabinet of Curiosities/ Wunderkammer

Unit 7 Haunt	
Time Frame	2 weeks
Student Learning Outcomes	The student will: ● Analyze how writers create stories that remain with readers after the final line. ● Examine how atmosphere, tension, imagery, characterization, and uncertainty shape a reader's emotional experience. ● Analyze how writers use implication, subtext, silence, and omission to communicate what is not directly stated. ● Create atmosphere through purposeful choices involving setting, sensory detail, diction, imagery, and pacing. ● Build psychological or emotional tension without relying solely on action or explicit explanation.

	● Experiment with ambiguity, withholding, and revelation to control what readers know and when they know it. ● Craft endings that create resonance, uncertainty, discovery, discomfort, or continued reflection. ● Use recurring images, symbols, motifs, or details to deepen meaning. ● Analyze the relationship between fear, memory, loss, desire, obsession, place, and the stories that linger. ● Make intentional craft choices based on a desired effect on an audience. ● Revise writing by identifying and strengthening the moments most likely to remain with a reader. ● Evaluate AI-generated observations or suggestions and make independent decisions about which ideas support or interfere with authorial intent. ● Reflect on how craft choices influence what readers remember. ● Identify patterns that may contribute to emotional impact. ● Analyze where tension rises or dissipates. ● Compare possible reader interpretations. ● HCAI Identify repeated images, language, or motifs. ● HCAI Test whether an ending creates the writer's intended effect. ● HCAI Evaluate and accept/reject AI observations based on authorial intent.
Essential Questions	● Why do some stories stay with us?
Content	● Stories that linger ● Emotional and psychological resonance ● Atmosphere and mood ● Suspense and tension ● The uncanny ● Fear and discomfort ● Memory, loss, absence, and longing ● Obsession and desire ● Setting as psychological space ● Implication and subtext ● Silence and omission ● Withholding and revelation ● Ambiguity ● Recurring images and motifs ● Symbolism ● Foreshadowing

	• Pacing and narrative control • Unreliable or limited perception • Endings and resonance • Reader expectation • Audience response • Revision for emotional and thematic impact • HC-AI as an analytical reader
Assessments	• **Routine assessment** • Daily Studio journal entries • Observation notebook checks • Craft conferences • Mini writes • Peer workshop participation and feedback • Craft analysis of mentor text(s) • Gallery walk • Wunderkammer • Craft ladder checkpoint • Peer workshop participation **AI assessment** Justify choices kept and rejected explanation text **Signature assessment** What Lingered: Stay with Me **Other assessment** Library field day **Portfolio assessment** Author's Website
Standards	CC.1.2.11-12 A- E Informational reading CC1.3. 11-12 A-F & H- Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12 A-F & V-W Informational writing CC.1.4.11-12 M-X, Narrative writing CC.1.5.11-12 A-G Speaking and listening

Key Vocabulary	Academic/Concept Vocabulary Resonance, lingering, atmosphere, tension, suspense, uncertainty, discomfort, psychological, emotional, implication, omission, absence, expectation, revelation, perception, obsession, memory, loss, longing, interpretation, ambiguity, consequence, audience, authorial intent, reader response, craft decision, deliberate choice	Literary Terms Atmosphere, mood, tone, imagery, sensory imagery, symbolism, motif, foreshadowing, subtext, irony, juxtaposition, repetition, pacing, suspense, tension, characterization, setting, unreliable narrator, limited point of view, ambiguity, dramatic irony, diction, syntax, figurative language, metaphor, personification, allusion, narrative distance, flashback. fragmentation, open ending, circular structure
Materials/ Resources	Joyce Carol Oates - "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been" Raymond Carver - "A Small, Good Thing" James Baldwin - "Going to Meet the Man" Supplementals George Saunders - various essays and stories Carmen Maria Machado - various excerpts Jesmyn Ward - excerpt from *Mother Swamp* Brian Washington Ted Chiang	

Unit 8 Publish	
Time Frame	2 weeks
Student Learning Outcomes	The student will: ● Curate a body of original writing that demonstrates growth, range, craft, and developing authorial identity. ● Evaluate previous work and select pieces for publication based on purpose, quality, significance, and audience. ● Substantially revise selected writing using accumulated feedback, reflection, and knowledge of craft. ● Edit and proofread writing for clarity, correctness, consistency, and publication readiness. ● Make intentional decisions about titles, excerpts, organization, visual presentation, and navigation.

	● Write author notes and reflective commentary that provide meaningful context for published work. ● Analyze patterns across a semester of writing to articulate growth in craft, voice, process, and authorship. ● Explain how mentor texts, feedback, experimentation, revision, and reflection influenced their development as writers. ● Design an accessible and cohesive digital portfolio for an authentic audience. ● Prepare and present original writing through a public reading or gallery experience. ● Evaluate the role of AI throughout the creative process and establish personal ethical boundaries for future AI-assisted writing. ● Articulate a developing philosophy of writing and authorship.
Essential Questions	● How do writers prepare their work to “meet the world”?
Content	● Curation and selection ● Publication readiness ● Substantive revision ● Editing and proofreading ● Authorial identity ● Voice and style ● Audience and purpose ● Writer's statements ● Author biographies and contributor notes ● Titles and excerpts ● Portfolio organization ● Digital publication ● Website navigation and cohesion ● Visual rhetoric and design ● Accessibility in digital publishing ● Copyright and intellectual property ● Ethical attribution and AI transparency ● Public reading and presentation ● Reflection and metacognition ● Craft analysis ● Semester-long growth ● Feedback synthesis

	• Publication decisions • Ethical Human-Centered AI use • Future writing goals	
Assessments	**Routine assessment** Individual craft and publication conferences Peer website review Editing and proofreading checks Daily portfolio progress check Accessibility and audience review Gallery walk preparation Public reading rehearsal Final reflection **AI assessment** Responsive writings: How did AI support your writing in this course? When did AI suggestions improve your thinking and decision-making? What AI suggestions did you reject, and why? How did you protect your individual voice and authorship? What ethical boundaries will guide you in future AI usage? **Signature assessment** Digital Author Portfolio with Craft Analysis Essay Revise and finalize a Google Site that demonstrates writing growth over a semester. Include a critical analysis that articulates the literary theory or rhetorical moves underpinning your work. Directions	
Standards	CC.1.2.11-12.I, J, L Informational reading CC.1.3.11-12.G-K Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12.T-X Publication	

	CC.1.5.11.12.A-G Speaking and listening	
Key Vocabulary	Academic/Concept Vocabulary Curation, publication, audience, purpose, authorship, identity, selection, synthesis, evaluation, reflection, metacognition, accessibility, attribution, intellectual property, copyright, ethics, transparency, revision, editing, proofreading, presentation, cohesion, consistency, intentionality, justification, publication readiness, digital citizenship, creative ownership	Literary Terms Voice, style, tone, diction, syntax, imagery, characterization, point of view, structure, pacing, motif, symbolism, theme, subtext, narrative distance, figurative language, genre, form, craft, authorial intent, rhetorical situation, reader response, oeuvre
Materials/ Resources	Mentor and craft resources Published author's sites Online literary magazines Digital portfolio examples Author biographies and contributor notes Writer's statement Literary work submission guidelines Recorded author's readings - student choice Revision demonstration - teacher created Public reading techniques Accessibility guidelines for digital publication Examples of effective titles, excerpts, and portfolio navigation	

Danville Area School District
Course Overview and Scope and Sequence

Course Title: Introduction to Creative Writing
Content Area: English
Grade Level: 11-12
Date Developed: July and August, 2026
Board Approval Date: October 14, 2026

COURSE OVERVIEW: Creative Writing Studio is an honors-level semester course designed for students in grades 11-12 who want to explore writing as a creative practice and an intentional craft. The course is built on the belief that creative writing opens the floodgates to all writing. Students often resist writing because they fear the "blank page." It is through consistent practice, experimentation, mentor texts, feedback, and revision that students learn and move beyond that fear and begin to develop the confidence to write.
Studio Beliefs: Community strengthens writing, reflection, and growth; technology supports writing and never replaces the human voice; every writer has something worth saying.
In the course:

- Students will write daily in a studio environment that emphasizes curiosity, creative risk-taking, craft, reflection, and growth. Rather than treating writing as a series of isolated assignments, the course invites students to practice authentic habits of writers.
- Students will observe and collect ideas, ask meaningful questions, experiment with genre, form, and style, study the techniques of published authors, draft original work, participate in workshops and conferences, significantly revise and edit their original work, and publish for various audiences.

Writing in this course is intentional; students will learn that:

- Polished, fully developed writing does not emerge from imagination or inspiration alone.
- Writers discover meaning through drafting, questioning, re-reading, researching, receiving feedback and revising work.

- Each writing project provides opportunities to identify a purpose, audience, emotional goal, "Wonder Question," and individual craft goals.
- Evidence of growth is demonstrated as writers explain their choices, respond to feedback, complete revision, and reflect on how their work has evolved.

The course will explore the following genres:

- flash fiction, short fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, memoir, place and travel writing, horror, sci-fi, speculative fiction, blogging, and multimodal storytelling.
- Genres will serve as the vehicle through which students develop transferable craft skills such as characterization, dialogue, imagery, atmosphere, structure, pacing, voice, symbolism, theme, style, and sentence fluency.

The semester is divided into two connected 45 day acts.

- During the first quarter - "Becoming a Writer" - students will establish daily writing habits, develop creative confidence, study foundational craft, and begin to identify themselves as "writers."
- During the second quarter - "Becoming an Author" - students will apply foundational skills with greater independence, shape meaning intentionally for an audience, revise with increasing sophistication, and prepare selected work for publication.

Every major project will move through a recurring **"Studio Cycle"**:
Experience ↣ Play ↣ Study ↣ Plan ↣ Draft ↣ Workshop ↣ Conference ↣ Revise ↣ Edit ↣ Publish ↣ Reflect ↣ Repeat
The course culminates in a digital author portfolio created through Google Sites. The portfolio will include polished writing, author reflections, individual craft goals, evidence of revision, a writer's declaration/manifesto, and an explanation of their growth across the semester. Students will share their work with an authentic audience through a final gallery walk, public reading, or publication celebration.
By the end of this course, student writers will understand that writing is not a fixed talent or one-time performance; it is a lifelong process of practice, discovery, refinement, and "becoming" where each ending sparks the possibility for a new creation.

ANCHOR STANDARDS: Pennsylvania Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grades 11-12)

KEY COURSE TEXT AND MATERIALS: A variety of short mentor texts will be used in this course. Possible categories include:
Published short and flash fiction
Poetry and spoken word performances
Memoir and creative nonfiction excerpts
Travel, nature, and place writings
Horror, speculative fiction, and magical realism writings and excerpts
Blogs, podcasts, visual narratives, and multimodal texts

Author interviews, craft essays, and revision demonstrations
Student selected mentor texts
On Writing - Stephen King excerpts
Selections from *Short Form Creative Writing* - Hummel and Lennox
Digital writing and publishing platforms including *Google Sites* and *Google Workplace*

KEY ASSESSMENTS: Daily writing and studio journals - Frequent "low-stakes" writing, observation, experimentation, idea collection, reflection, and craft practice

- **Craft studies and mentor text analysis** - Close reading and annotation focus on how writers use structure, language, imagery, dialogue, pacing, voice, and other craft techniques
- **Original writing projects** - Flash and short fiction, poetry, memoir, creative nonfiction, place/travel writing, genre writing, blogging, and multimodal storytelling
- **Workshops and conferences** - Structured peer workshops, teacher conferences, oral and written feedback, post-workshop revision plans
- **Revision and editing evidence** - Draft comparisons, revision annotations, editing checklists, craft-goal reflections, and explanations of meaningful changes
- **Speaking, listening, and performance** - Author readings (including cuts for larger works), storytelling, poetry performance, workshop discussion, project presentations, and response to peers' work
- **Digital author portfolio** - A curated Google Site containing polished publications, author notes, craft goals, revision evidence, reflections, and the "Writer's Manifesto"
- **Instructor observation** - Ongoing evaluation of studio habits, preparation, collaboration, risk-taking, persistence, independence, and use of feedback

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE					
Unit	PRIORITY STANDARDS	SUPPORTING STANDARDS	ASSESSMENT	MATERIALS	TIMEFRAME
Unit 0 - Welcome	CC.1.4.11-12 A		Kahoot and quizlet Quiz	Plagiarism slides Policies and	2 days

Guiding question Why do creators have responsibilities to themselves, their audiences, and one another?	Informational reading CC.1.4.11-12: M - R Narrative writing CC.1.5.11-12: A, B, D, G Speaking and listening		Mini project: Write a letter to future-filmmaker -self to be sealed until the end of the semester.	procedures Studio journals Syllabus	
Unit I - Notice Guiding question How do writers learn to see what others overlook? Essential understandings Writers develop ideas by paying sustained attention to the world around them. Specific concrete details allow readers to experience an ordinary moment in a new way. Sensory imagery creates atmosphere,	CC.1.2.11-12 C, D, E Informational reading CC1.3. 11-12 C-F & I-K Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12 A-F & H-I Informational writing CC.1.4.11-12 M-V, X Narrative writing	CC.1.5.11-12 A-B; D-G Speaking and listening	**Routine assessment** Daily Studio journal entries Observation notebook checks Craft conferences Mini write Peer workshop participation and feedback Craft analysis of mentor text(s) Craft Ladder Checkpoint Gallery walk **AI assessment** Revision decision log - accept/reject	**Anchor texts:** Annie Dillard - "Seeing" George Orwell - "A Hanging" Ross Gay - excerpt from *The Book of Delights* Aimee Nezhukumatathil- "The Ribbon Eel" from *World of Wonders* Supplemental texts (excerpts only) Gary Soto - "The Pie" Naomi Shihab Nye - "Valentine for Ernest Mann" Raymond Carver - "Cathedral"	2 weeks

emotion, and connection.			**Signature assessments** The Art of Noticing Portfolio Entry **Portfolio assessment** Writer's Website Bio/Auto-bio section Unit one reflection	Mary Oliver - "The Summer Day" Other media Brandon Stanton - "Humans of New York" Paintings, street art, nature photography, etc	
Unit II - Imagine Guiding question How do writers transform ordinary ideas into unforgettable stories?	CC.1.2.11-12.A-B, D, G Information reading CC1.3.11-12.A-F & I-K Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12. A-F Informative writing CC.1.4.11-12. M-R, U, X Narrative writing	CC.1.5.11-12.A-G Speaking and listening	**Routine assessment** Daily Studio journal entries Observation notebook checks Craft conferences Mini write Peer workshop participation and feedback Craft analysis of mentor text(s) Craft Ladder Checkpoint Gallery walk Flash Fiction Exchange and Reflection Writing	Anchor texts Sandra Cisneros - "Eleven" Shirley Jackson - "The Lottery" Jamaica Kincaid - "Girl" Supplemental texts Ted Chiang - "Exhalation" Karen Russell - "The Barn at the End of our Term" Lydia Davis selected flash fiction collection Ernest Hemingway's six words Etgar Keret -	2 weeks

			AI assessment Revision decision log - accept/reject **Signature assessment:** Story Seeds **Portfolio assessment** Writer's Website Imagine Collection	"Crazy Glue" *Flash Fiction Online* *Smoke Long Quarterly* Craft readings Stephen King - *On Writing* excerpt Anne Lamont - "Shitty First Drafts" Other media *Pixar Short Films*	
Unit III - Design Guiding question How do writers shape meaning through intentional choices? Essential understanding Every writing choice influences how readers experience a story. Writers shape meaning through intentional	CC.1.2.11-12.A-B, D, E, G, K, L Information reading CC1.3.11-12.A-F & H-K Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12. A-F & K-L Informative writing CC.1.4.11-12. M-X Narrative writing	CC.1.5.11-12.A-G Speaking and listening	**Routine assessments** Daily Studio journal entries Observation notebook checks Craft conferences Mini writes Peer workshop participation and feedback Craft analysis of mentor text(s) Craft Ladder Checkpoint	Anchor texts Ray Bradbury - "The Pedestrian" and "A Sound of Thunder" Ken Liu - "The Paper Menagerie" James Hurst - "The Scarlet Ibis" Flannery O'Connor - "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" and "Good Country People" Supplemental texts Kate Chopin - "The	2 weeks

decisions involving structure, pacing, symbolism, beginnings, endings, and revision.			**AI assessment:** Revision decision log - accept/reject **Signature assessment:** Designed for Meaning: An Intentional Story **Portfolio assessment** Writer's Website - Design Edition	Story of an Hour" Jhumpa Lahiri - "Interpreter of Maladies" Karen Russell - "St. Lucy's Home for Girls Raised by Wolves" Craft conversations Steven King - On Writing interview Anne Lamott and Neil Gaiman interview	
Unit IV - Remember Guiding question How do memories become a story? Essential understandings Memories are reconstructed rather than replayed as they occurred. Reflection transforms experiences into meaningful stories.	CC.1.2.11-12 A- E Informational reading CC1.3. 11-12 A-F & H- Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12 A-F Informational writing CC.1.4.11-12 M-X Narrative writing	CC.1.5.11-12 A-G Speaking and listening	**Routine assessments** Daily Studio journal entries Observation notebook checks Craft conferences Mini writes Peer workshop participation and feedback Craft analysis of mentor text(s) Gallery walk Craft ladder checkpoint	Anchor texts Jeannette Walls - excerpt from *The Glass Castle* Michelle Zauner - excerpt from *Crying in H Mart* David Sedaris - various short stories Supplementals Ross Gay - *The Book of Delights* - various essays Brian Doyle - "The Wet Engine"	2 weeks

Different memoir structures reveal different truths about the same experience. Voice develops through honesty, specificity, and purposeful reflection. Personal stories often illuminate human experiences. Revision strengthens clarity and emotional impact without changing the truth of lived experience HCAI can support organization and questioning, but meaning must remain the writer's own.			**AI assessment** Revision decision log - accept/reject **Signature assessment** Memory: Stories We Carry **Portfolio assessment** Author's website: Remember Edition	*The Electric Typewriter* memoirs Other media Family photos Recipes Postcards Childhood memorabilia Maps Keepsakes	
Unit V - Wander Guiding question How does moving through the world shape the stories we tell?	CC.1.2.11-12 A- E Informational reading CC1.3. 11-12 A-F & H- Reading literature		**Routine assessment** Daily Studio journal entries Observation notebook checks Craft conferences		2 weeks

Essential understandings Writers discover stories by moving through the world with curiosity and attention. Place influences identity, memory, relationships, and perspectives. Observation becomes more meaningful when combined with research, reflection, and lived experience. The places closest to us often contain stories we have never noticed. Writers help readers experience place rather than simply describing it. HCAI can deepen understanding by supporting research and verification but writers decide which details matter	CC.1.4.11-12 A-F & V-W Informational writing CC.1.4.11-12 M-X, Narrative writing CC.1.5.11-12 A-G Speaking and listening		Mini writes Peer workshop participation and feedback Craft analysis of mentor text(s) Gallery walk Craft ladder checkpoint Field journals and other wander writings Audio recording or interview responsive writing **AI assessment**Revision decision log - accept/reject **Signature assessment** No Passport Required Field Journal: Finding Extraordinary Stories Close to Home **Portfolio assessment** Author's Portfolio		

and why.			Community story map		
Unit VI - Wonder Guiding question What questions are worth writing about?	CC.1.2.11-12 A- E Informational reading CC1.3. 11-12 A-F & H- Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12 A-F & V-W Informational writing CC.1.4.11-12 M-X, Narrative writing	CC.1.5.11-12 A-G Speaking and listening	**Routine assessment** Daily Studio journal entries Observation notebook checks Craft conferences Mini writes Peer workshop participation and feedback Craft analysis of mentor text(s) Gallery walk Craft Ladder Checkpoint Question wall **AI assessment** Answer to one philosophical question and explanation of counterargument chosen	Anchor texts Mary Oliver - various poems Ross Gay - excerpts from *The Book of Delights* Aimee Nezhukumatathil - various poems Supplementals Ada Limon various poems Ocean Vuong - excerpt from *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* & various poems Tracy K. Smith various https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/tracy-k-smith Jane Hirshfield various poems	2 weeks

			*Student created questions are due at the top of all writing for this unit only. Explore revision - Am I still exploring this question? **Signature assessment** The Question Project: Follow What You Wonder. **Portfolio assessment** Author's Portfolio Studio Cycle applied throughout the unit	Other media NASA photography Microscopic photography Timelapse videos Spoken word performances Music with no lyrics Museum objects Scientific illustrations Cabinet of Curiosities/ Wunderkammer	
Unit VII - Haunt Guiding question Why do some stories stay with us?	CC.1.2.11-12 A- E Informational reading CC1.3. 11-12 A-F & H- Reading literature CC.1.4.11-12 A-F		**Routine assessment** Daily Studio journal entries Observation notebook checks Craft conferences Mini writes Peer workshop	Joyce Carol Oates - "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been" Raymond Carver - "A Small, Good Thing" James Baldwin - "Going to Meet the	2 weeks

	& V-W Informational writing CC.1.4.11-12 M-X, Narrative writing CC.1.5.11-12 A-G Speaking and listening		participation and feedback Craft analysis of mentor text(s) Gallery walk Craft Ladder Checkpoint Wunderkammer **AI assessment** Justify choices kept and rejected explanation text **Signature assessment** What Lingered: Stay with Me **Other assessment** Library field day **Portfolio assessment** Author's Website Studio Cycle applied throughout the unit	Man" Supplementals George Saunders - various essays and stories Carmen Maria Machado - various excerpts Jesmyn Ward - excerpt from *Mother Swamp* Brian Washington Ted Chiang	
Unit VIII - Publish	CC.1.2.11-12.I, J, L Informational	CC.1.3.11-12.G-K Reading literature	**Routine assessment**	Mentor and craft resources	2 weeks

Guiding question How do writers prepare their work to “meet the world”?	reading CC.1.4.11-12.T-X Publication CC.1.5.11.12.A-G Speaking and listening		Individual craft and publication conferences Peer website review Editing and proofreading checks Daily portfolio progress check Accessibility and audience review Gallery walk preparation Public reading rehearsal Final reflection **AI assessment** Responsive writings: How did AI support your writing in this course? When did AI suggestions improve your thinking and decision-making? What AI suggestions did you reject, and why? How did you protect your individual voice and	Published author’s sites Online literary magazines Digital portfolio examples Author biographies and contributor notes Writer’s statement Literary work submission guidelines Recorded author’s readings - student choice Revision demonstration - teacher created Public reading techniques Accessibility guidelines for digital publication Examples of effective titles, excerpts, and portfolio navigation	

			authorship? What ethical boundaries will guide you in future AI usage? **Signature assessment** Digital Author Portfolio with Craft Analysis Essay Revise and finalize a Google Site that demonstrates writing growth over a semester. Include a critical analysis that articulates the literary theory or rhetorical moves underpinning your work. Directions		