



**Gifted LearningLinks Program
Course Syllabus**

**Instructor name: A. Yskamp
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Course Title: Creative Writing Honors Online

Course Description:

Creative Writing Honors provides students with the opportunity to write creatively in a variety of genres, including poetry, drama, short story, and essay. The main philosophy of this course is that good reading makes for good writing. Therefore, the accompanying reading assignments are designed to enhance student access to ideas and purposes of writing. The course content and assignments are arranged by audience, beginning with writing for younger audiences and ending with older audiences. The online component of the course will allow the students to interact with each other, in an effort to develop a community of learners. In this course, the students write primarily for themselves but the online component allows them to develop their writing through interactions with each other. Peer review will be an integral part of this course. Note that students are responsible for the core readings of this course but are also welcome to use other authors as models for their own writing.

Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Know about the fundamental genres of creative writing.
- Understand the principles of writing creatively.
- Read various models for their work.
- Write original work based on these models.
- Compile and submit an anthology of their collected work for the course.

Resources and Materials:

- Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft (Penguin Academics Series) by Janet Burroway ISBN-13: 9780321357403
- The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros 0679734775
- The Practice of Poetry edited by Robin Behn and Chase Twichell 006273024X

Schedule:

SEMESTER ONE

	Topic/Focus	Activities & Reading Assignments	What do I need to post to the Discussion Board?	What do I need to turn in?
Week 1	Orientation to Online Learning	Getting to Know You	Introduction	Interest Survey

	Topic/Focus	Activities & Reading Assignments	What do I need to post to the Discussion Board?	What do I need to turn in?
Week 2	Session 1: Introduction	<p>Read Invitation to the Writer pg. xxi in Imaginative Writing – Do “Try This C.2” pg. xxvi – make a list, pick a single a word, write a paragraph, write those first lines.</p> <p>For those who haven’t got the book yet, choose one of the below to make a list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things on which I am an expert • Things I have lost • Signs of winter • What I have inside my body • Things people have said to me • What to take on a journey • Things I have forgotten <p>Make your list, pick a single a word from your list and write a paragraph. Write a single line about each item on the list. Is there a story or poem here?</p>		Journal work

GLEE Sample

	Topic/Focus	Activities & Reading Assignments	What do I need to post to the Discussion Board?	What do I need to turn in?
Week 3	The Image	<p>Reading: From <i>Imaginative Writing</i> pp.3-15, “The Giant Water Bug,” “The Ring of Time,” “The Hawk in the Rain,” “Snow Day,” “Facing It,” and “Naming of Parts.”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From your reading, which phrases and descriptions are particularly descriptive and/or compelling? Why? 2. List some phrases or descriptions that do nothing for you, that aren’t evocative, or are confusing. 3. Which is your favorite piece? Why? 4. Which technique used here would you like to “steal” for your own writing? Why? <p>Write a poem or story about the relationship between image and substance, between surface and depth [in an eye, water, mirror, metal], etc.</p>		Poem or Story

GLELL

	Topic/Focus	Activities & Reading Assignments	What do I need to post to the Discussion Board?	What do I need to turn in?
<p>Week 4</p>	<p>Prose Poems versus Flash Fiction</p>	<p>Check out this site: http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/lit-elements/overview/ for a concise, visually accessible discussion of the elements of fiction.</p> <p>Read the following: Flash Fiction <i>"How to Set a House on Fire"</i> <i>"Geometry Can Fail Us"</i> <i>"A Yard Full of Birds"</i> <i>"Just Before Recess"</i></p> <p>Prose Poems <i>"The Colonel"</i> <i>"Home Burial"</i> <i>"All Over the Lot"</i> [attached] <i>"Hammer and Nail"</i> [attached]</p> <p>I'd like you to consider [and write about in your journaling – just choose one story, and one prose poem to journal this week]:</p> <p>Review of plot structure: http://www.glencoe.com/sec/literature/course/course1/unit/shortstory.shtml</p> <p>Click on "activity" to plot out Jack and the Beanstalk. * Characterization * Voice * Plot * Atmosphere</p> <p>Also answer, what can a poem do that a story cannot, and vice versa.</p>		<p>Journal work</p>

	Topic/Focus	Activities & Reading Assignments	What do I need to post to the Discussion Board?	What do I need to turn in?
Week 5	Experiments in Form	<p>This week we'll be reading flash fiction that takes a variety of different forms (some quite unusual). I've attached a sampling: "A Telephonic Conversation" "Currents" "Author Outlines"</p> <p>You will also be experimenting with form in the stories that you write. You are probably familiar with the quotation, "form follows function," but what does that mean? It means that the content is essentially linked to the way it's presented, and vice versa. After talking about the story arc, and trying to follow a set form, you can now try to throw that out the window -- temporarily at least -- and create a new structure for your new story.</p>	Your story should be no more than 750 words, due posted on the Blackboard discussion board.	Original writing
Week 6	Narrative Essay	Shooting an Iguana	Answers	Essay
Week 7	The House on Mango Street	<p>This week we'll begin reading <u>The House on Mango Street</u>, which is a novel written by Sandra Cisneros composed of many very short chapters or individual stories. It's an interesting way to write a novel, and we'll be discussing both the content and its structure as we go along.</p> <p>Please read through page 38 ["And Some More"] and answer the questions on the attached worksheets (borrowed from the Oakland Unified Schools).</p>		Journal work
Week 8	The House on Mango Street	This week we'll read from pg. 39 ["The Family of Little Feet"] through page 78 [No Speak English] and complete the attached worksheets.		Worksheets
Week 9	The House on Mango Street	Read to the end of House on Mango Street		Worksheets

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Week 10 & 11	<p>The House on Mango Street</p> <p>CREATIVE WRITING PROJECT [adapted from an online assignment: http://members.accessus.net/~bradley/HOMSwriting.html]</p>	<p>Sandra Cisneros tells her readers that she decided to write her novel, <i>The House on Mango Street</i>, because "you will always be Mango Street. You can't erase what you know. You can't forget who you are." The purpose of this project is to create your own book, which will help you remember what you know, who you are, and where you came from, as well as showing others.</p> <p>Chapter length: At least 100 words. A chapter under 100 words will be considered underdeveloped and will not receive the full 8 points per chapter. Points will be awarded for creativity and evocativeness.</p> <p>The chapters can be in any order you choose as long as it follows your Table of Contents.</p> <p>The project is worth 100 points and should reflect attention and effort. Each chapter is a mini story, but you should also be aware that the assembled stories will have one effect.</p>		<p>Your finished work must have the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Title/Title Page (5 pts) * Dedication (5 pts) * Table of Contents (5 pts) * 5 Chapters (see below, possible 16 pts each) * 1 paragraph describing your reaction to the assignment (5 pts) <p>TOTAL POSSIBLE: 100 points</p> <p>Your chapters must be chosen from the following subjects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Your name * Your neighborhood * Made up games from your childhood * A time you got into trouble * A time you saw someone else get into trouble * Advice from an adult * A positive story from your experiences at school * A negative story from your experiences at school * A special family member * A happy time for you * Work [yours or someone else's] * A special holiday * A sign you're growing up * The big game * A birth/death * One chapter of your own choosing

SEMESTER TWO

	Topic/Focus	Activities & Reading Assignments	What do I need to post to the Discussion Board?	What do I need to turn in?
Week 12	Poetic Forms	<p>Read the attached explanation of three kinds of sonnets.</p> <p>Choose one of Shakespeare’s Sonnets, one that really “speaks” to you, and do a line by line explanation or “translation” of it. http://poetry.eserver.org/sonnets/</p>		Translation
Week 13	Poetic Forms	Write your own 14-line sonnet (Petrarchan, Spenserian, or Shakespearean – please let me know which one you’re attempting).	Also posted on the discussion board	Sonnet
Week 14	Poetic Forms	Villanelles & Sestinas		Villanelle and/or Sestina
Week 15	Poetic Forms	<p>Read and do the assignment on pg. 200, The Practice of Poetry. Pantoums & Ghazals</p> <p>Read selection and attempt your own poem</p>		Pantoum or Ghazal
Week 16	Poetic Forms	Walt Whitman Emily Dickinson		Free Verse
Week 17	Poetic Forms	Line Breaks		Line Break Poem
Week 18	Drama	<p>Read “Trifles,”</p> <p>Online module</p>		Answers

	Topic/Focus	Activities & Reading Assignments	What do I need to post to the Discussion Board?	What do I need to turn in?
Week 19	Drama	<p>So this week, I'd like you to pick a short-ish short story (under 10 pages) that you really like. There are many in our book, and many more online. Here are some links:</p> <p>http://www.classicshorts.com/ http://www.classicreader.com/browse/6/ http://www.short-stories.co.uk/</p> <p>Of course you can use a story from your own collection, but as I'd like you to send the original, unless it's also online, that's going to be a lot of typing for you (or I guess you could scan it, if you can give me a good legible copy.)</p> <p>Once you've chosen a short story, choose a character to analyze.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Answer the (attached) questionnaire about him/her, also list and analyze his/her actions. 2. Choose a moment in your short story where something intense has happened (but for which there is nothing given in terms of character reflection/thought/reaction). Imagine you are thinking for that character. 3. Write a one page interior monologue – that is, how your character talks to him/herself. 		Answers and Interior Monologue
Week 20 & 21	Drama	Dramatize the short story		Original Adaptation
Week 22	Humor	Begin Humor Section Reading: <i>Barry, Woody Allen, Steve Martin</i>		Journal Work
Week 23	Humor	Reading: Humorous Selections		Journal Work
Week 24	Humor	Humor Terms		Journal Work

	Topic/Focus	Activities & Reading Assignments	What do I need to post to the Discussion Board?	What do I need to turn in?
Week 25	Humor	Parody of a well-known story, tale, historical event, to be chosen by the student.		Original Parody
Week 26	Editing	Exercises		Revision
Week 27	Character	Read collection on character development		Answers
Week 28	Character	Write short piece in which character is depicted by virtue of key object		Character piece
Week 29	Setting	Read sample of stories and poems that feature place		Journal response
Week 30	Setting	Write original piece on place		Piece on place
Week 31	Stages of Writing	Robert Olen Butler		Postcard story
Week 32	Credo	Read Selection, Write Original		Credo
Week 33	Fiction	Nyer article on Ray Carver http://www.newyorker.com/online/2007/12/24/071224on_onlineonly_carver?currentPage=all		Response
Week 34 & 35		Peer Review		cc. me
Week 36	Anthology	Editing, revising, etc.		Collection of all works
Final Evaluation				

Student Evaluation and Grading Policies for Credit Courses Only:

CTD Grading Scale

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Below 60
A 93-96	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Grade is approximately 50% original writing, 35% journal work, 15% participation

Instructor Biography:

With a B.A. from UC Berkeley and a M.A. from New York University, Amanda Yskamp has been teaching more than 15 years with 3 years online with CTD's Gifted LearningLinks. She is an award-winning author of fiction, poetry, memoir, personal essays and newspaper articles.

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GLL Sample