



PROFESSIONAL WRITING ACADEMY

CREATIVE WRITING: FICTION (ONLINE) – with The Writing Institute

About the course

AIMS

This course allows you to:

- Explore a range of creative, practical and critical skills in writing prose fiction.
- Develop an understanding of the professional skills a fiction writer requires (e.g. discipline, attention to detail, ability to work to deadlines, editing and proofreading).
- Start to identify your potential as a writer.
- Practise independence, autonomy and critical judgment as you write a piece of creative writing of up to 2,000 words at the end of the course.

OUTCOMES

On completing this course you should be able to demonstrate:

- Awareness of the factors that impact upon and shape the creative process and your own practice of the craft of writing.
- Increased knowledge of how writers use techniques including character, setting, point of view and structure.
- Growing judgment in the selection, development and realisation of ideas.
- Greater technical proficiency (grammar, spelling, syntax, etc.) in your writing.
- A willingness to experiment and explore different techniques and writing prompts.
- The ability to self-direct your writing practice.
- Professionalism in working with others.

TEACHING

- The course lasts 6 weeks.
- Each session runs over a week.
- All the teaching, interaction with participants and tutor moderation takes place in the PWA online classroom based in the UK, accessed via a website.

- Course materials and forums are available/open 24 hours a day.
- Sessions open on a Monday; assignments must be completed and uploaded by Saturday with critiquing of fellow participants' work completed by the end of Sunday, before the next session opens.
- Completed sessions remain open throughout the course so that you can review course materials and revise your work.

The course is taught using the following:

- Short audio files from your course tutor.
- Short video files from tutors, writers or other industry experts.
- Tutor guidance.
- Online lecture notes and practical writing prompts and exercises.
- Directed reading and viewing lists.
- Online peer critiquing from other participants in the group.
- The assistance of a group moderator.
- The support of an online community and virtual classroom.
- A dedicated writing resources area, which is continually updated.

FINAL SUBMISSION

At the end of the course you will work on a longer piece of creative prose writing of up to 2,000 words, perhaps a short story or the start of a novel. This might be an edited and polished version of one of the writing exercises you've worked on during the course, or a new piece that shows the skills you've developed so far.

You may commission a detailed report on your submission for an extra fee after completing the course (details available in the final session). This will assess your ideas, writing style, handling of techniques such as character and use of point of view, and advice on where to take your writing next. The report will be written by a publishing professional based in the UK with experience in writing and editing fiction.

SESSION PLAN

Session 1: You as a Writer

What kind of writer are you and how do you develop a daily writing practice? How to tap into creative inspiration, and take ideas from your head and onto the page. You'll experiment with automatic writing and story-prompt exercises, then post a longer creative piece to the forum for fellow participants to critique.

Session 2: Point of View

Who is telling a story, and why it matters. You'll explore first-person ('I'), second-person ('you') and third-person ('he/she') narrators and experiment to find out which you feel comfortable writing.

After some writing warm-ups, you'll try out different voices to see the effects and generate story ideas. You'll polish one longer piece to workshop with the group.

Session 3: Compelling Characters

Memorable characters are at the heart of all fiction. This session is about how to begin to write characters and use techniques that engage and interest readers.

You'll create character sketches based on images, memory and observation, interrogate your fictional protagonists until they come to life, then post one character piece to a forum for peer discussion.

Session 4: Setting and Mood

How to create settings that lend atmosphere to your fiction and transport your reader through time and space.

You'll experiment with using your senses, precise observation and visual prompts to create different emotional responses, and write the opening of a story to share with the group.

Session 5: Story Structure

Thinking about beginnings, middles and ends, the different shapes a story can take, and simple ways to develop plot and pace your writing.

You'll try some flash fiction then develop a longer piece to share with your fellow writers in the forum.

Session 6: Pull it all Together

Now you'll apply the techniques you have learned through the course to write a final longer piece of up to 2,000 words. You might rework a favourite piece you produced in an earlier session or develop something new based on what you've learned.

There are writing warm-ups to get the creative juices flowing, practical ways to beat writer's block, and editing tips to help you meet your final deadline.

What happens after the course?

You have the option to continue working with your peers in a dedicated course alumni area online - for no extra cost. You will have access to all the learning materials and a private area to continue writing, reviewing and discussing your work with your peers.

GETTING THE MOST FROM ONLINE LEARNING

The course has been carefully designed by the Professional Writing Academy, which has extensive experience in the UK delivering writing courses online in universities and for publishers and literary consultancies. The course is intended to develop the skills we believe are essential for good writing, including:

- a greater knowledge of story structure
- an understanding of craft skills and professional conventions
- discipline, independent practice and confidence in your work
- the ability to critically evaluate your own and others' work.

The learning model is structured around a combination of peer and tutor feedback and aims to develop and hone your critical faculties through constant practice and revision.

You will not be given detailed tutor feedback on every piece of work you submit (there are mentoring schemes offering this, if that is your preferred route).

You will have the option, for a fee, to submit your final written piece for review by a writing tutor in the UK. This detailed individual feedback report will discuss your strengths and weaknesses, and offer advice on where to take your work next.

Although your tutor monitors your work through the course, perhaps more important in the learning experience are the close working relationships you establish with other writers in your group.

The practice of critiquing each other's work increases and refines your understanding of what makes a good story – and the relationships that form very often carry beyond

the course to provide you with ongoing discussion and feedback from a close-knit group of writers you trust.

Sometimes, writers with little experience of critiquing or working in a group can feel rather intimidated by the process at the outset – often because they think they will feel more comfortable with a one-to-one relationship with a tutor.

This is fine, but it isn't what we offer here. So please think carefully before accepting a place that will challenge you, develop your work, and require you to work with other participants and to deadlines.

This course is not a passive experience predicated on submitting work for 'marking' by a tutor, but a challenging, dynamic process that we know will help you grow into the best writer of fiction that you can be.

