

## CTY Course Syllabus

### Writing and Imagination

Date/Time	Activity	How Activity Will Be Taught/Learned
<b>WEEK ONE</b>		
<b>Day One</b>	<b>Poetry: An Introduction</b>	
9-10:15am	Warm-up activity	Students will interview their classmates and then introduce them to the class as a whole (e.g. "This is Hannah, she's 11 and she's from Los Angeles," etc.)
	Discuss honor code; prepare classroom code of conduct	Read honor code together; ask students what appropriate classroom behavior is; write on large sheet of paper to be posted in classroom
	Freewrite: What is your definition of creative writing? What kinds of writing do you like to do? How do you think people become better writers?	Freewrite for five minutes, followed by class discussion
10:25am-11:30am	Administer pre-test	
12:30-2:00	Discussion/reading: What is poetry? What distinguishes poetry from other kinds of writing? What kinds of poetry do you know about?	Read Eve Merriam, "How to Eat a Poem." Lecture: How do we read a poem? To what elements students should we pay attention? What goes into writing a poem? Discuss: How does Merriam feel about poetry? How do we know?

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	Poetry: Simple Structures (acrostic, color poems, haiku)	Read Piercy, Carroll, Hollo and Issa. Discuss how poets use structure to create poetry: e.g. for color poems, how do authors decide what details or images evoke the color red? Why might an author choose to write about the color red? Poetic devices covered: repetition, rhyme, line breaks
	Write a poem (acrostic/color/haiku); the student will have a choice between all three	Students will have time to write and to share with their classmates; they will read their poems aloud to one another, initiating a classroom policy of sharing/polite listening
2-2:30	Introduce <i>When You Reach Me</i> , by Rebecca Stead; discuss reading habits and strategies for effective reading	Read the summary and the first few pages together. Share with students techniques for how to read effectively (taking notes, etc.) Emphasize a practice of <i>careful</i> reading - only 20 pages means I expect you to take your time!
Homework	Read pages 1 - 29 of <i>WYRM</i> and Neruda's "Poetry." Write down your observations and experience reading the poem using the How to Read Poetry guide	
<b>Day Two</b>	<b>Poetry: Detail and Imagery</b>	

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9-10:15am	Warm-up activity	Write/share: Marooned on an island - what five objects would you want to bring with you? Why?
	Poetry: Imagery, Metaphor and Simile (aesthetics, feelings)	Look at poems that rely heavily on images, sounds and metaphors to evoke feeling: "In a Station at the Metro," Ezra Pound; "Fog," Carl Sandburg; "You Can't Write A Poem About McDonalds," Ronald Wallace; "The World is not a Pleasant Place to Be," Nikki Giovanni. Lecture: Introduce students to concept of evoking feeling through aesthetics: metaphor, simile, alliteration, onomatopoeia. Discuss: Generate examples together
10:25-11:30am	Writing: add onto Giovanni's poem, creating an extended image-focused metaphor	Prompt: Each student writes one stanza that builds on and sustains Giovanni's central metaphor regarding community building and love. We combine the stanzas to create a class poem

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	Discussion: Giving constructive feedback	<p>One of the most important parts of writing is revision, and constructive criticism is essential to revision. How do we give constructive criticism - in other words, how can we be helpful without hurting others' feelings? Students will receive handouts with questions/tactics to use in giving others feedback, and share out loud examples they think up of productive critique</p>
12:30-2:00pm	Poetry: Objects/Observations/Odes	<p>Lecture: Reading poetry for its emphasis/focus on specific details or object; learning to notice detail in poetry (before we analyze it). Read "Ode to the West Wind," Percy Shelley; "Ode to my Socks," Pablo Neruda, "Ode to a Goldfish," Gyles Brandreth. Discuss the specificity and detail in these poems. What are some characteristics they share? Why would a writer write an ode to an object rather than a person? Why might a writer use direct, simple words rather than flowery language?</p>
	Writing: Create an Ode	<p>Prompt: Write an ode to an object or place, using the techniques of ode-writing we've discussed</p>

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	Workshop: Odes	Students listen to their peers read their work, and give constructive feedback for revision based on previous discussion
2:00-2:30	Discuss <i>WYRM</i>	What do you think of Miranda so far? Her mother? Her friends? How is life in the late 1970s for sixth-graders different from life in 2010 for sixth graders?
HW	Revise odes according to feedback; read pages 30-53 of <i>WYRM</i>	
<b>Day Three</b>	<b>Poetry: Music and Poems</b>	

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9am-10am	Warm-up activity	Write/share: If you could go back or forward in time, when and where would you go? What would you want to do? Who would you want to talk to?
	Poetry: Rhyme, Meter, Rhythm	Introduce students to mechanics of meter and feet (iamb, trochee, etc) through the use of hip-hop music. Give students examples of each kind of meter/feet and have them scan poetry. Discuss why a poet would choose a certain kind of meter/feet for his/her poem.
10am-11:30am	Poetry: Music	Lecture/discuss: How does music impact poetry? Can we consider lyrics to be poetry? How do poems about music suggest musicality? Read/listen to "The Weary Blues," Langston Hughes; "Little Boxes," Malvina Reynolds; "Across the Universe," John Lennon
	Writing: Write to music	Prompt: I will play different kinds of (age-appropriate) music - classical, hip-hop, jazz, pop - while students write short poems inspired by what they hear
Lunch		
12:30-2:00	Workshop: Music poem	Students choose one of the short poems they began before lunch, and share within small groups, receiving feedback from their peers

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	Revision	Students revise and expand poem based on feedback
2:00-2:30	Discuss <i>WYRM</i>	What do we know about the mystery so far? Are you concerned for Miranda? How might this story be different if it were set in a rural area instead of Manhattan?
HW	If not completed, finish revision of music poem; read pages 54-75 of <i>WYRM</i>	
<b>Day Four</b>	<b>Poetry: The Avant-Garde</b>	
9:00-10am	Warm up activity	Two truths and a lie
	Poetry: Nonsense and Irony	Read poems that rely on disorienting and disrupting readers' expectations: "Jabberwocky," Lewis Carroll; "The Jumblies," Edward Lear; "We Real Cool," Gwendolyn Brooks; "One Perfect Rose," Dorothy Parker. Discuss how these poems are disorienting, and why the writers might want to produce that kind of reaction in their readers

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10am-11:30am	Poetry: Sound, Visual and Digital Poetry	Examine examples of concrete poetry: "Poem in the Shape of a Potted Christmas Tree," George Starbuck; "On the Other Hand," John Mutford; "l(a," E.E. Cummings; "Rendering the Legible Illegible," Claus Bremer
	Writing: Visual/Concrete Poem	Prompt: Students will create a visual/concrete poem, where the shape of the text corresponds to the content of the text. This activity will involve art materials
Lunch		
12:30-2:00	Poetry: Found Poetry	Found poetry is poetry collected from different sources, as varied as law briefs, magazines, and discarded grocery lists. We'll read "An Unemployed Machinist," John Giorno; "Property," Charles Reznikoff, "The Unknown," Hart Seeley
	Writing: Found Poetry	Prompt: Students will construct their own found poems from supplied newspapers and magazines
2:00-2:30	Discuss <i>WYRM</i>	Why does Stead reference <i>A Wrinkle in Time</i> so heavily? What do you think the plot of <i>Wrinkle</i> (as established together on the first day of class) has to do with <i>WYRM</i> ?

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HW	Read <i>WYRM</i> , pages 76 - 91	
<b>Day Five</b>	<b>Poetry: Telling Stories</b>	
9:00-10:30	Warm up exercise	"Who am I?" Each student receives an identity of a famous person via a post-it note on his or her back (eg. Barack Obama, Miley Cyrus, etc.) The student must walk around the classroom and ask yes/no questions to find out his or her identity.
	Poetry: Poetry and History	Read poems that describe historical moments or situations, or tell stories about historical moments. I will provide historical context: "In Response to Executive Order 9066," Dwight Okita; "Praise Song for the Day," Elizabeth Alexander; "Dulce Et Decorum Est," Wilfred Owen.
	Writing: Historical Poem	Prompt: Write a (free verse) poem about a person or persons from another era that you've learned about in school, in books or from your parents
10:30-11:30	Workshop: Historical Poem	Students will share poems in small groups, and receive/provide constructive feedback. If time, students will begin revision of historical poem
Lunch		

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12:30-2:00	Poetry: Narrative Poetry	<p>Read poems that tell an extended story: "Porphyria's Lover," Robert Browning; "The Highwayman," Alfred Noyes.</p> <p>Lecture will direct student to look at poems in terms of plot (rising action, climax, etc.). Discuss: How are narrative poems different from short stories? How do these writers use diction and voice more explicitly than other poems we've read?</p>
	Writing: Narrative Poem	<p>Prompt: Write a narrative poem with special attention to diction and voice. Attempt to write in a voice that is not your own (eg. from the point of view of a famous historical figure or a mysterious recluse). Follow a narrative arc. (Assignment directed towards students anticipating next week's move into short fiction.)</p>
2:00-2:30	Discuss <i>WYRM</i>	<p>What do you make of Miranda's veil image (page 72)? Do you think we all have our own veils?</p>

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Weekend HW	Finish any revisions of uncompleted or unrevised work. Read pages 91 - 109 of <i>WYRM</i> over the weekend. Begin thinking about a possible character or subject you would like to write about in a short story. Write instructions on how to make a bologna and cheese sandwich for someone who has never been to this planet.	
<b>WEEK TWO</b>		
<b>Day Six</b>	<b>Introduction to Short Fiction</b>	
9:00 - 11:30	Warm up exercise	Password: Variation on the old game show. I pick two students to come to the front of the classroom. Having written down a word previously, I show the class the word. They take turns offering clues to the two students until one of them guesses the word.
	Bologna and cheese introduction	I have students give me verbal instructions on how to make a bologna and cheese sandwich. Point of exercise is to illustrate the significance of specificity in story development.

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	Discuss: What makes a good story? What are the elements of a short story?	Students volunteer elements. Together, we will come up with Plot/Conflict, Character Development, Specificity/Clarity, Setting
		Examples of each of these elements from stories/books/films we've read and seen
		Read "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" together. Discuss. How does James Thurber establish character? Conflict?
		Fill out a character development sheet for Walter Mitty
12:30 - 2:00	Writing: Begin planning short fiction	Go over important elements of short fiction writing together once more. Give students blank character development sheets, and have them begin constructing their own characters. Share in groups. Have students ask for feedback: does this sound like a character you'd like to read about? Why/why not?
2:00-2:30	Discuss WYRM	Why does Mom seem so reluctant to let Richard into her life and Miranda's life?
HW	Read WYRM 110-127. Finish character profile sheet if needed.	
<b>Day Seven</b>	<b>Short Fiction: Dramatic Arc and Horror</b>	

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9:00-11:30	Warm-up activity	"Is that a fact?"
	Discuss/Read: Dramatic Arc	Go over the elements of dramatic arc. Can students think of examples from books and movies?
		Read Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart." How does this story follow a dramatic arc? (Point of view - narrative unreliability)
	Write: Making Decisions for Your Story	Read worksheet and answer questions. Develop the dramatic arc of your story. Share in small groups.
12:30-2:00	Read/Discuss: Horror	Read Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" and Jane Yolen's "Mama Gone." What similarities do we see between these stories and Poe? What makes a horror story? What are its features? What kind of styles do these writers have?
	Write: Horror	Using the generic features we've discussed, begin writing a short horror story.
2:00-2:30	Discuss WYRM	Does Julia's description of time make sense to you?
HW	Read WYRM 128-147. Finish horror story.	
<b>Day Eight</b>	<b>Short Fiction: Setting and Science Fiction</b>	
9:00-11:30	Warm-up activity	Mini-Jeopardy

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	Peer review: Horror story	Share fiction in peer review groups, and get feedback for edits
	Discuss: Setting	Why does setting matter? What does setting do for a story? What kind of place/locale are you planning on for your longer short fiction?
		Read: Yolen, "Wilding." How does this story use setting? Why is setting particularly important in science fiction?
12:30-2:00	Continue: Setting	Read: Bradbury, "The Veldt." How does this story use setting? Why is setting particularly important in science fiction?
	Worksheet: Setting	Fill out worksheet regarding setting in your long short story.
2:00-2:30	Discuss WYRM	How does Stead develop her secondary characters, such as Annemarie, making them dimensional and "real"? What does she use that you could emulate?
HW	Finish WYRM. Finish SF/Fantasy story and work on "long" short story.	
<b>Day Nine</b>	<b>Short Fiction: Style and Humor</b>	
9:00-11:30	Warm-up activity	Likert Scale line-up
	Workshop: SF/Fantasy story	Peer review in groups of three or four

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	Discuss: Style	What is style? How can you distinguish literary style? How can you develop your own? What stylistic techniques do you rely on in your own writing? Which writers do you like to imitate in your own writing?
	Read: Humor	Read Twain's "Excerpts from Adam's Diary," Eudora Welty's "Why I Live at the P.O." How does the writing style support the humor? How do we decide what's funny?
12:30-1:35	Write: Work on "long" short story and/or humorous short story.	Students work quietly on writing, in order to catch up on assignments.
	Discuss WYRM	What did you think of the ending? Did you expect the twist?
1:40-2:30	Meet with MFAN and WRDW	Meet with the other two writing classes in the MPR. Share our writing with one another.
Weekend HW	Write humorous short story. Read Yolen, "Lost Girls." Finish longer short story. Finish any revisions left uncompleted.	
<b>Day Ten</b>	<b>Short Fiction/Drama: Derivative Fiction and Intro to Drama</b>	
9:00-11:30	Warm up activity	Hangman
	Workshop: Humorous fiction	Peer review in groups

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	Read/Discuss: Yolen, "Lost Girls," (in class) Gaiman (Derivative Fiction)	Why do writers find it compelling to write about already established worlds and characters? What signals do Gaiman and Yolen give that these are characters they're adopting? What can writers do to make these characters their own? What are the possible dangers of derivative fiction (writing something too much like the original story)? Have you ever written derivative fiction of your own? If so, why?
12:30-1:35	Computer lab	Peer review in groups
1:40-2:30	Introduction to Drama	What is drama? What are its principle elements? How are plays different from short stories and poetry?
	Read Percival Wilde's "The Sequel"	How does this play demonstrate the elements of drama we've discussed?
HW	Write derivative story. Decide which of your poems and short stories you'd like to type up to include in your book.	
<b>WEEK THREE</b>		
<b>Day Eleven</b>	<b>Drama</b>	

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9:00-10:15	Warm up activity	Free-write: If you were a teacher, what kind of class would you teach? For what level? What sort of materials would your students read? What kind of activities would you do?
	Listen: Sherlock Holmes radio drama	Listen to "The Headless Monk of Trevenas Chapel" (1946). How does the radio show create setting, mood, theme, character and plot through sound?
10:25-11:30	Write and Rehearse: Sound plays	Students work in groups of three or four to create a play based entirely on sound - ideally one that loses nothing if not watched when performed
12:30-1:30	Computer lab	Type up stories/poetry for final book
1:35-2:30	Read the balcony scene from Romeo and Juliet	Can we decipher meaning here? Why is this scene so memorable?
	Watch the balcony scene in the Franco Zefferelli film (1968)	How is watching the scene on film different than reading it? How does Zefferelli's direction of the scene add to the story?

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HW	If possible, keep typing up your stories/poems at home. Choose one short story we've read in class so far. Adapt it into a play, using the elements we've discussed. Be prepared to share and to discuss how/why you chose it	
<b>Day Twelve</b>	<b>Grab Bag Writing: Drama</b>	
9:00-10:15	Warm up activity	Hangman
	Rehearse and perform sound play	Students perform their sound plays for one another; while in the audience, students close their eyes to discern if the plays are effective
10:25-11:30	Read <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> , Act One	Contextualize play, give biographical information on Oscar Wilde. What's humorous about the play? What does Wilde suggest is important?
12:30-1:30	Computer lab	Type up stories/poetry for final book
1:35-2:30	Peer review play adaptations	In groups of three and four
HW	Read <i>Earnest</i> , Act Two. Finish revisions of all work, type up all work, and bring in packet Friday morning	
<b>Day Thirteen</b>	<b>Grab Bag Writing: Drama</b>	
9:00 - 10:15	Decide on play adaptation in groups	Students are divided in groups of three and four, and choose one play adaptation to practice and perform

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	Discuss <i>Earnest</i> , Act Two	Read Gwendolen and Cecily's scene aloud. Where does the humor come from?
10:25 - 11:30	Read <i>Earnest</i> , Act Three	Discuss <i>Earnest</i> . Did you expect the ending?
	Rehearse adaptation performance	In groups, supervised by instructor and PA
12:30 - 1:30	Watch: <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> (2002). Discuss.	What's different in the movie? Why did the director and script writer make these choices? What effect did they have on Wilde's play?
	Evaluations	Students fill out evaluations
HW		
<b>Day Fourteen</b>	<b>Wrapping Up</b>	
9:00 - 10:15	Warm up activity	Freewrite: What did you enjoy most of what we read? Least? Why?
	Discuss: Reflection on class	Discuss what students freewrote
	Performance: Play adaptations	Students finalize and perform their play adaptations for their peers.
10:25 - 11:30	Post assessment	
12:30 - 1:30	Read Mark Twain's "The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County." Discuss.	How does this (very) short story encapsulate the literary themes we've been discussing throughout the past three weeks?
1:30-2:00	Set up in the MPR	