

Writing and Imagination Course Syllabus

Johns Hopkins University
Center for Talented Youth

Introductions (4-5:30pm)

- Honor Code Discussion
 - Create class honor code (large group discussion about what students would like to see happen/wouldn't like to see happen in class with emphasis placed on the importance of respect)
 - Read CTY honor code aloud as a class and discuss similarities between two codes. What can we add to our class honor code? Sign honor code.
- ACROSTIC poems
 - create using construction paper and colored pencils
 - write last name down the side of page and start each phrase with the letter of your name on that line (phrases must be positive)
 - Can make a "wacky" or a "normal" poem
 - Musical chairs activity
 - Hand in ACROSTIC poems
 - Person left w/o a chair at the end of each round picks an ACROSTIC poem at random and reads it aloud to the class to introduce the other classmate

Writing and Imagination Day 2

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning Icebreaker • Pre-Test • Organize Classroom • What is poetry? What makes for good writing? Poet's Toolbox introduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes/No detective game (famous people) • When finished begin reading "Poetry" by Pablo Neruda and answer discussion questions in journals. <i>What is poetry? How can poetry be powerful? What is the speaker of the poem thinking and feeling?</i> • Create "Stacks o' Stuff" • Reading of "Poetry" by Pablo Neruda (discuss meaning of poem and the meaning of individual words.) How can poetry be powerful? What is the speaker of the poem thinking/feeling? What Tools do you think that Neruda uses to write his poem well? • Class discussion of tools of the trade (create class list)
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free Write in journals (5 min) • Tools of the Trade: Sound • Learning to write musically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Trees, Weeds, Seeds; Try and get rid of the "internal editor" • Class "found poem" with invented words (brainstorm class list of interesting words from previous free-write; create an individual 10 line poem based on these words) • Dramatic reading of "Jabberwocky". Class discussion of diction, tone, mood. How does the poet use sound in this poem? What is the relationship between poetry and sound? How does sound enhance the poem? • Writing exercise: write poem that doesn't make too much sense but that sounds interesting, musical if you wish (model "Jabberwocky" with nonsense words). Use sound and "spice it up" with other Tools of the Trade.
4-5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to write musically, cont. • Applying the tools of the trade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish nonsense poems • Students read their poems aloud in small groups. <i>What tools of the trade are used in each poem?</i> • Each group creates a tangible "writer's toolbox" containing all of the tools of the trade.

Writing and Imagination Day 3

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning icebreaker • Applying the tools of the trade, cont. • Recognizing Tools of the Trade: Diction • Observation Activity (Observing like a poet: “Looking at things in different ways”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes/No detective game • Finish “writer’s toolbox” • Read “Pied Beauty” by Gerard Manley Hopkins and discuss in large group. What Tools of the Trade are used in the poem? Look up words you don’t know. • Silent walk outside: students learn to observe and write down their observations. Take detailed notes and maybe illustrate what you see.
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal free write • Observing like a poet, cont. • Tools of the Trade review: Diction (“Making choices as a writer”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic: Flarf (<i>What is Flarf or a Flarf poem? What connotation does the word “Flarf” have?</i>) • Put finishing touches on observations. Think about what your object of observation is “like”. • Create a poem based on your observations about nature. Think carefully about word choice and model “Pied” Beauty” by Gerard Manley Hopkins. How would a certain word really help develop the tone? Is the word “Le mot juste”?
4-5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools of the Trade review: Sound • Class poem creation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and listen to “How She Bowed to her Brother” by Gertrude Stein. <i>How does this poem sound? What do you think is going on in the poem?</i> • Create class poem for line-up purposes (each person says a word). Create individually and then vote as a group.

Writing and Imagination Day 4

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to workshops • Comparison Activity: poetry and art (visual) • Tools of the Trade review, cont. (sound and diction) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop procedure explained and written on the board. Students write procedure in their notes (Read, Discuss, Ask, Revise). • Students complete a class practice workshop on “God’s Grandeur” by Gerard Manley Hopkins. TA plays the role of Hopkins. Think about the following questions during the discussion stage: <i>What works well in this poem? What didn’t you understand? What would you like to see the writer do in the poem?</i> • Discussion and viewing of Duchamp’s “Nude Descending a Staircase.” <i>How does this painting compare to Gertrude Stein’s poetry?</i> • Take “Jabberwocky” nonsense poem from day 2 and create a nonsense poem that models Gertrude Stein’s work. Students write their nonsense poem on construction paper, cut out the individual words, and then paste them over again in a new order on new construction paper
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools of the Trade review, cont. (sound and diction) • Tool of the Trade: Description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete nonsense poems. When finished, read Poe’s “Fall of the House of Usher” • Class discussion on descriptive language. Read Elizabeth Bishop’s “The Fish” aloud to the class. Students note examples of descriptive language, metaphor, and other tools of the trade in spiral notebooks.
4-5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporating memoir into today’s Tool of the Trade: Description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students read pp. 5-25 of <i>The House on Mango Street</i>. Write reflective journal entry: <i>What tools of the trade are used? Provide examples from the text.</i> • Class discussion of journal reflections

Writing and Imagination Day 5

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimenting through sound and diction: What charges do words have through their sounds? • Tools of the Trade, cont. • Applying Tools of the Trade to a new task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short lecture on connotation and “word charges” • Word Cloud activity: In small groups, create word clouds of positively or negatively charged words on construction paper with colored pencils. Hang clouds around room to use for future reference. • Read Emily Dickinson’s “Bee! I’m expecting you!” <i>What is going on in the poem? What is Dickinson’s style? What tools of the trade are present? What type of poem is this?</i> • Create an Epistolary poem from one animal to another modeling Dickinson’s “Bee! I’m expecting you”
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools of the Trade: Metaphor and Metaphysical Conceit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class discussion: What is a metaphor and what does it do? What are some examples of metaphors from the texts we have read so far? • Class reading and analytical discussion of John Donne’s “Valediction Forbidding Mourning”
4-5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the craft: creating metaphor from observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What’s it like?” group activity Start w/ observation on a sheet of paper. Pass around paper in small groups and add a metaphor to get 10 lines per group. Give poem a title and read aloud to class

Writing and Imagination Day 6

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing the craft: creating metaphor from observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put finishing touches on the “What is it like?” group activity Think about possible recitation strategies (volume, clarity, articulation/pronunciation, “spice it up”) and choose one person per group to recite the poem to the class at the podium
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tool of the Trade: The List Listening and Free-Write 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class reading and analytical discussion of Walt Whitman’s “Song of Myself” <i>How does Whitman incorporate The List into his poem?</i> <i>Can poetry change the world? Can words change the world?</i> Listen to “What to a slave is the fourth of July?” What does the fourth of July mean to you?

Writing and Imagination Day 7

Class Period	What	How
7-8:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Looking into the memoir	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read pp. 25-50 of <i>The House on Mango Street</i> and discuss in small groups (class splits in half). Make a list of important things you've noticed while reading to share with the rest of the class. Class then comes together for a large discussion.

Writing and Imagination Day 8

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool of the Trade: Imagery, cont. • Thinking about poetry as an art • Free-write • Listening • Developing the craft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class reading and analytical discussion of Mary Oliver’s “The Summer Day.” • Class discussion: What is the poet trying to do in this poem (“The Summer Day”)? What <i>should</i> a poet do in every poem? What are their responsibilities? What is the relationship between poet and audience? • Answer the questions that Mary Oliver poses in her poem “The Summer Day” • Ezra Pound’s “Canto I” • Class discussion: What is a vignette? Write a vignette based on one by Sandra Cisneros and include the tools of the trade
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the craft, cont. • Workshop #1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put finishing touches on vignettes • Read an Emily Dickinson poem when finished. • Workshop vignettes in small groups according to the workshop format presented and practiced during the first week. <i>Is the author “showing and not telling”?</i> <i>Is the author “exploding the moment”?</i>
4-5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop #1, cont. • Metaphysical poetry; Tools of the Trade: Imagery, cont. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class reading and discussion of Ezra Pound’s “At a Station in the Metro” (diagram the explication on the board) • Draw this poem: What images come to mind? (use construction paper and colored pencils)

Writing and Imagination Day 9

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools of the Trade: Diction; review of sound; learning to recognize the Tools in poetry • “Wild Card” activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group activity: each group picks one Emily Dickinson poem, reads it, and takes notes (What does the poem mean? What do the words mean? What Tools of the Trade are used in the poem?) Groups brainstorm how to recite the poem to the class. One person per group then recites the poem to the class and the group presents a mini-lesson on what they have discovered about the poem. • Construct a poem, vignette, etc. in whatever form you wish and use the tools of the trade, especially “The List”
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Elements of the Dramatic Monologue •”Wild Card” activity, cont. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Short lecture/class discussion on the components of the dramatic monologue • Read “My Last Duchess” aloud. Class discussion on character and plot. • Put finishing touches on work from first class session today
4-5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Memoir, cont. • Poetry/vignette recitation practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class reading and discussion of pp.53-64 of <i>The House on Mango Street</i> • Students choose their favorite creation so far and recite it to the rest of the class

Writing and Imagination Day 10

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dramatic Monologue, cont. • Developing the craft • Workshop #2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class discussion and review of dramatic monologue. <i>What is it? What elements of plot and character are evident in “My Last Duchess”?</i> <i>What is important to consider when writing your own dramatic monologue?</i> • Students create their own dramatic monologues (focus on plot and character) • Share in small groups and give suggestions to group members (follow the workshop format)
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free-write and discussion • Wrap-up of poetry unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students answer the following questions in journals: How does technology currently affect writing and creativity? How will it affect writing and creativity in the future? • Create a final draft of one poem. Be creative, use artwork, mount poem on construction paper
4-5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recitation practice • Free-work period • Listening to and appreciating poetry • Memoir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pick favorite piece, prepare, read to class, and accept feedback from class. • Complete all work that has been left undone over the past few days (4th of July free-write, technology free-write, dramatic monologue, etc.) • Reading (in French) of Guillaume Apollinaire’s “Le Pont Mirabeau.” Class discussion following reading. • Reading from <i>The House on Mango Street</i>

Writing and Imagination Day 11

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing compelling plots, telling compelling stories • New Tool of the Trade: Plot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell your neighbor an interesting story. Then figure out the essential elements that made the story work • Read “To Build a Fire” in small groups. How does the author set up the plot, get us interested, and create conflict? Why does the man make mistakes?
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do stories have problems/conflicts? • Applying Tools of the Trade to a new task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the elements of Plot (Rising Action (A-exposition, B-rising action, C-climax, D-falling action, E-resolution) • Write a story like “To Build a Fire” in which a character embarks on a journey of some sort and finds him/herself in trouble (3rd person, one character, journey, conflict, character encounters trouble, Think about incorporating the ‘Tragic Flaw’)
4-5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Applying Tools of the Trade to a new task, cont. • “Wild Card” Activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish writing short stories modeling “To Build a Fire” • Create riddles in small groups (Does your riddle make sense? Are the elements unified?)

Writing and Imagination Day 12

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop #3 • “Wild Card” activity, cont. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students workshop short stories in small groups according to the workshop format • Finish riddles in groups and then share with the class
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools of the Trade: Humor • Developing the craft: Group activity • Memoir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and discussion of part of Huck Finn; intro to use of humor in writing • Students create and present short, humorous dialogues in small groups modeling Huck Finn. • Class reading of <i>The House on Mango Street</i>

Writing and Imagination Day 13

Class Period	What	How
7-8:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools of the Trade: Description/ Setting/Unity • Interpreting the story: creating a visual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class discussion and lesson • Edgar Allan Poe “The Cask of Amontillado” (read in small groups and take notes). Students will also make a personal list of all words that they do not know. They will then share this list with their group and the group will create a master list of 15 words that will enhance the understanding of the story. The group will then look-up these words. • In small groups, pick a scene with dialogue and perform it for the class. Create props, create scenery, set up one corner of the room to be your group’s “stage”, and assign roles.

Writing and Imagination Day 14

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpreting the story, cont. • Tools of the Trade: Character (and unity revisited) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish skits from yesterday. Practice and memorize dialogue. Perform skits for the class. <i>How will you convey emotion to the audience?</i> • Willa Cather’s “Paul’s Case”- read individually and then reflect in journal: Explain why the ending makes sense based on what you have read” Also look up all words you don’t know(if finished early then read a Hawthorne story in the anthology).
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Unity revisited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish “Paul’s Case” reading and reflections • Class discussion of “Paul’s Case.” Describe the plot. What is wrong with Paul? What quotes best characterize Paul and describe his “case”?
4-5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools of the Trade: Character (and unity revisited), cont. • Prelude to short story creation • Developing the craft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short lecture on Unity and how it relates to Poe’s “The Cask of Amontillado” and Willa Cather’s “Paul’s Case” • after discussing character in “Paul’s Case” create own character using the “20 questions” game • Begin writing short stories using your developed character.

Writing and Imagination Day 15

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the craft, cont. • Wrapping up the memoir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue work on short stories. Students are each assigned to a specific tool of the trade that must be incorporated in their story. • Finish <i>The House on Mango Street</i> (do not read the “Red Clowns” chapter) When finished, write a reflection on one of the following topics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Some say this memoir is about home. What do they mean? How is home important to Esperanza’s identity? 2) Esperanza changes in this book. In what was does she change? Do you like the changes? 3) In many ways this book is about encountering and dealing with stereotypes (Latino, women, and poor) How do they affect Esperanza? What is Cisneros saying about society?
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrapping up the memoir, cont. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish reading <i>The House on Mango Street</i> and answering the discussion questions. When finished, work on short stories. • Class discussion of journal reflections
4-5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesizing plot, unity, and character • Developing the craft, cont. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Borges’ “Funes, the Memorius.” Class discussion of plot and characterization of Funes. <i>How is Funes like a computer? Can you have imagination AND memory?</i> • 15 minutes to work on short stories.

Writing and Imagination Day 16

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the craft, cont. • Workshop #4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minutes to finish short stories. • Workshop short story in small groups
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Ready for Publication” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type short stories, poems, and other work on the computer in the lab. Think about presentation and illustration. Make your story look like a polished work of literature. Create cover page and illustrate. Also create a back page. Will you create a book? If so, bind together with ribbon as demonstrated.
4-5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish publication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mount poem/story on construction paper, make a book if desired, illustrate, etc. Share finished product with other classmates that are also finished.

Writing and Imagination Day 17

Class Period	What	How
9-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students complete SPE's• Prepare for post-assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Study questions written on board. Students study in small groups and review all course material and texts.
12:30-2:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students take post-assessments• Students receive certificates	
4-5:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students present/recite their work in a writing share setting with the other Writing and Imagination class section.

Writing and Imagination Day 18

Class Period	What	How
9-11:00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Last Hurrah	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create and practice presentation for closing ceremony (class metaphor poem).• Students read and sign each other's work• Create a class contact list