

Aims:

- i. To facilitate students in the practice of creative writing through a series of writing exercises and to introduce them to a set of creative heuristics or "tools": skills and techniques appropriate to this practice.
- ii. To help students develop their critical reading of "creative" texts such as short stories and poems, and apply their analytical skills in order to improve the quality of their own writing.
- iii. To establish a communicative and supportive workshop environment in which students will share their work in progress, giving and receiving constructive criticism.
- iv. To begin to familiarise students with the contemporary practice of writing in London through visiting a selection of venues as well as researching and reading a series of London-based literary journals.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course students should:

- i. Have read and discussed a selection of work by at least 5 different published writers and responded to this selection in workshop discussion and in writing in a reader-diary of 1000 words minimum, in which there is evidence of a developing critical methodology, integrating their various reading / writing experiences over the summer into their own writing projects;
- ii. be familiar with a variety of aspects of writer's craft and demonstrate this familiarity in the giving of careful feedback to peers during workshop, in the reader-diary, and in their own writing;
- iii. have created a portfolio of at least 1600 words of their own creative writing in addition to an author's note of at least 500 words, tracing the course of their own progress and changing perspectives during the month;
- iv. have submitted a poem or short story of their own to a London based or other poetry/short fiction journal.

Teaching and learning strategies

The course is delivered through a multidisciplinary programme consisting of:

- i. Formal lectures/workshop, seminar and small group sessions;
- ii. Field trips led by members of the Kingston faculty or contracted professionals;
- iii. Independent writing sessions.

Classes

Classes will start promptly at the times shown in the schedule.

For all field trips to London you will travel on public transport using travel cards.

On days where there are lectures you will have a half hour break from 11.00 - 11.30 am and, if applicable, between 3.00 - 3.30 pm.

N.B. The University reserves the right to vary or revise the above content at its discretion.

Class Schedule

Day	Date	Time	Place	Lecture / Workshop	Lecturer
1	Friday 29 June	2-4pm	KU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Introduction: Getting Started: Principles and Practice</i> 	Anna Stearman
2	Tuesday 3 July	10am-3pm	Ticket office, Vauxhall Mainline Station (Victoria line tube & trains to Waterloo)	<u>FIELD TRIP 1</u> Tate Britain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Working from the Image</i> • <i>Observation</i> 	
3	Thursday 5 July	10am-3pm	KU	In Class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Free-verse poetry</i> • <i>Presentations 1, group A</i> 	
4	Tuesday 10 July	10am-3pm	Just outside Russell Square Tube Station- (Piccadilly line)	<u>FIELD TRIP 2</u> <u>Holborn & Lincolns Inn</u> <u>The British Museum</u> <i>Creating a Sense of Place</i>	
5	Thursday 12 July	10am-3pm	KU	In Class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Writing Exercises</i> • <i>Presentations 1: group B</i> 	
6	Tuesday 17 July	10am-3pm	Platform 19, Waterloo Station	<u>FIELD TRIP 3</u> <u>St Martins in the Fields & The Poetry Library, South Bank</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Opening and closing</i> • <i>Character-building</i> • <i>The Interplay between Poems</i> 	
7	Thursday 19 July	10am-3pm	KU	In Class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reading the short story</i> • <i>Presentations 2, group A</i> 	
8	Tuesday 24 July	10am-3pm	Platform 19, Waterloo Station	Freud's House <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lives: Place and Time</i> 	
9	Thursday 26 July	10 am-3pm	KU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Presentations 2, group B</i> 	

Preliminary Reading

Bailey, Tom. *On Writing Short Stories*, Oxford University Press, 2000 (2010).

Heffron, Jack. *The Writer's Idea Book*. Writer's Digest Books, 2003.

Selections of poetry will also be provided.

Please bring a writing notebook – a notebook of whatever kind you like best

Anna Stearman, 20 Feb 2012

Teaching Sessions

We will approach the learning, culture and practice of Creative Writing in London through engaging in a series of guided writing exercises, through attendance at readings and performances and through group discussions of assigned reading and students' own writing. We will explore the practice of writing in London as it is played out during the current season through a series of trips to places vibrant with writers in the past and in the present. Students will take turns presenting drafts of their work to the group workshop for discussion and revision advice. In each workshop students will engage in writing exercises in order to produce the raw material or *beginning* of a piece. This material will be shaped into a piece of writing (poem, short story or chapter of a longer piece), in the students' own time. Drafts of these pieces of work will be shared and discussed with the group in subsequent sessions, until a second, third or further draft is reached. Each workshop follows a similar structure: reading and discussing the assigned texts by poets and prose writers with reference to aspects of craft; engaging in a creative writing exercise; sharing work with the group for feedback.

Students will begin by looking at various ways of *gathering* ideas, images, characters, memories and words as creative writing material. As the course progresses the emphasis will shift as these pieces are read and brainstormed in class, and shaped and finished with feedback.

Day One: Introduction

Getting Started: Principles and Practice

In this class, we will discuss the syllabus and arrangements for the summer session and establish a rota for the presentation of your writing. We will also discuss the reader diary, author's note, journaling and the establishment of good practice for workshop participation.

Assignment: As preparation for the course, read any one chapter from Tom Bailey, and in addition, read one short story and one poem, and come to the session prepared to discuss them.

Day Two:

Field Trip 1: Tate Britain, Pimlico and Westminster

We will meet at 10am at Vauxhall Station, and walk across the river to Tate Britain, which holds the biggest collection of British Art in the country. Please see <http://www.tate.org.uk>

Day Three:

In Class.

There will be an opportunity to share some of your early drafts with the group in the first of our four presentations.

Assignment: Before you come today, read the first two chapters in Linda Anderson's book. The six students who are presenting their work will need to bring 13 copies of each piece of work started, typed and single-line spaced.

Day Four:

Field Trip 2: Bloomsbury Bookshops, Holborn and Lincoln's Inn

Today we will meet at Russell Square tube station, and will walk through Bloomsbury and Holborn to Lamb Conduit's Street, taking in the bookshops, a stone's throw from The British Museum, London University and The Old Curiosity Shop.

Day Five:

In Class

The 6 students who did not present last week will now present their draft poems and stories to the group. Please make 13 x copies.

Day Six:

Field Trip 3: To the Poetry Library, across the River.

Meeting at Waterloo station at 10am, we will explore the south bank, arriving at the Poetry Library, in the Royal Festival Hall, just after lunch. As well as a magnificent collection of poetry books, this has a complete collection of all British and many foreign poetry journals and quiet reading and writing areas. Librarians are expecting us and will help individual students with their research. See <http://www.poetrylibrary.org.uk>

Assignment: Read the poetry selections given to on Tuesday, and bring one of the poems with you, as well as your writing notebook. After the field trip, as you have a travelcard you can buy a discounted ticket on the Tate Bus (River-boat bus) which will give unlimited travel between Tate Britain, Tate Modern and the Royal Festival Hall.

Day Seven:

In Class

Presentations 2, group A.

Voice and Character: Inhabiting the “I”. Today, following on from our sketches from the previous class and from further discussions of poems “found” in the poetry library, we will explore further ways of developing a character. We will discuss techniques for developing draft work and revising and editing it into shape, ready to present the final portfolio. We will also discuss the efficacy of the draft reader diaries and author’s notes and how to improve them.

Day Eight:

Field Trip 4: Freud’s House.

Meeting at Waterloo Station at 10am, we will then travel on the underground, explore and write. After the trip, you may wish to visit Camden and the market, also on the Northern Line.

Day Nine:

In Class

Presentations 2, group B.

Please bring copies, as before. The 2nd workshop should include some discussion of revisions that you have made to earlier pieces of work.

There are many interesting events in London during the summer, and the proposed schedule is therefore subject to changes on consultation with the class.

Assessment

A Portfolio: 2,000-4,000 words: 100%

Anna Stearman, 20 Feb 2012

This portfolio will include the following three items:

A. Two completed fiction pieces of 800-1800 words each and the drafts of those pieces (begun in the lecture/workshop and redrafted at home). You may choose among any of the pieces started through guided writing exercises in the workshop or pieces started at home in response to those exercises since the start date of the course.

OR

Four - six complete poems of 10 – 60 lines each and the drafts of those poems. You may choose among any of the pieces started through guided writing exercises in the workshop or pieces started at home since the start date of the course.

OR

an equivalent combination of prose and poetry, (subject to prior discussion with the tutor.)

B. Reader Diary: Four critical analyses of assigned texts of no more than 300 words each. You may choose among any of the assigned reading from your textbooks (Burroway, *Imaginative Writing*, 2007 and Bailey, *On Writing Short Stories*, 2000) and from the poetry reader.

C. Author's Note: Your own commentary on the creative writing in the portfolio should provide a personal, in depth, analytical account of the reading and writing experience and illustrate that you have engaged in the processes of self-directed learning by mapping this development over the summer session. You may draw on ideas generated in the reader diary.

Attendance: Attendance is expected at all course activities and absences will be penalised (20% maximum).

Core Texts

- Anderson, Linda *Creative Writing, a Workbook with Readings*, Routledge, 2005
- Bailey, Tom. *A Short Story Writer's Companion*, Oxford University Press, 2001
- Cox, Ailsa. *Writing Short Stories, A Routledge Writer's Guide*, Routledge, 2005
- Heffron, Jack *The Writer's Idea Book*, Writer's Digest Books, 2003.

Further Reading

- Bell, Julia
and Paul Magrs, eds. *The Creative Writing Coursebook*. London: Macmillan, 2001.
- Padel, Ruth. *The Poem and The Journey, and sixty poems to read along the way*, Chatto & Windus, London, 2007

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