

Keshequa High School

Creative Writing

Course Syllabus - Ms. James

Creative writing is a workshop course in which we discover, analyze, and apply the methods and forms used in various forms of fiction, poetry, and dramatic writing. We emphasize experimentation and practice, taking our cues from published writers, poets, and playwrights. Writing is a craft, a process, a form of art in itself. We are guided by Ezra Pound's dictum: "Make it new." Creative writing does not only provide us with an opportunity to express ourselves, but also allows us to focus on word choice, diction, form, editing, idea generation, and other skills useful in non-fiction writing.

COURSE GOALS

- To acquire and apply a variety of techniques to generate and edit fictional writing;
- To understand the writing processes of professional writers and students writers;
- To become familiar with both traditional and contemporary forms of fiction;
- To evaluate fiction according to various criteria;
- To read, edit, and evaluate as a writer/editor; goals are polish and accuracy.
- To organize and keep a three-ring binder with all work in progress / all stages to reflect the utilization of the writing process / portfolio of all finished pieces will be kept on file.

STUDENTS WILL KNOW:

Upon successful completion of this course, including having been thoughtfully engaged in each learning task, with the group dynamic of the class, and having been willing to accept risks and challenges as a learner/writer, and make attempts to apply the material of the class to his or her own life, present and future, the student will know:

- that learning to write requires work and personal involvement;
- that different forms and styles of writing are required for different situations;
- that writing is both private and public, and can be improved through interaction with other students/writers;
- that writing improves with thoughtful practice; it is a skill that needs to be crafted;
- that all writing requires careful attention to organization, word choice, point of view, characterization, sensory detail, and a clear sense of purpose;
- that writing can be useful in coming to understand a topic, ourselves, or our place in relationship to other people, events or ideas;
- that writing can be either formal or informal, and that formal writing has different requirements in terms of form and style (always be aware of this when writing your own pieces);
- that in the early stages of writing a writer needs to suspend judgment of his/her own work;
- that a writer needs a chance to reflect upon his/her own work, which helps a writer identify his/her strengths and weaknesses, and become a more confident writer;
- that reading and analyzing a variety of other people's writing is important in the process of developing one's own writing;

- that reading can provide ways to clarify our own values and to bring preconceived ideas into question, adding to personal growth;
- that in order to become a better reader / writer one must practice;
- that good writers have sound reasons for everything that happens in their writing;
- that growth as a reader requires work, and personal involvement;
- that oral reading can be an effective way of communicating one's understanding of literature to an audience;
- that a thoughtful analysis of a piece of literature can enhance the performance of the literature in an oral reading;
- that attention to pace, tone, eye contact, and voice inflection can enhance audience experience with literature read aloud;
- that response to literature does not have to be limited to written or spoken language; that visual and dramatic representations of abstract ideas is a useful way of communicating one's understanding;
- that visual media can be read and analyzed just as much as language, and can lead to similar understandings of concepts, ideas and self;
- that discussion of ideas with a group of people or a fellow student can be used to expose one to other points of view and can give one a chance to try out ideas on an audience and can be effective in encouraging tolerance and open-mindedness;
- that the rewards of learning need not be limited to future goals, but can be valuable to a person's life in the present;
- that writing is a process which emphasizes that one follows all the steps in the writing process: prewriting, brainstorming, writing first drafts, peer-editing, self-editing, conferencing, reflecting, revising, polishing, and publishing (sharing in class and entering contests for publication).

STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE

- To acquire and apply a variety of techniques to generate and edit fictional writing;
- To understand the writing processes of professional writers;
- To become familiar with both traditional and contemporary forms of fiction / nonfiction;
- To evaluate fiction according to various criteria;
- To read as a writer and editor objectively;
- To orally share final works with fellow students, class members and to possibly submit some works to publications such as *Merlyn's Pen* or *The National Andean*, or the student newspaper, *The Talon*, etc.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

May use the following assessment tools:

performance /effort

compositions

projects

self-evaluations

three-ring binder

conferencing

improvement

meeting deadlines

note taking / lectures

Daily work/ homework / class participation

Demonstrations / presentations

Rubrics for peer editing /evaluation

Following the steps in Writing Process

Portfolio with all work on file in class

Publication via literary journal, paper, etc.

Focused Concentration Areas- goals for achievement

Handing in all assignments on time

Journal entries

ASSISTANCE/PARENT COMMUNICATION

Writing is an on-going process which takes patience and persistence on the part of the student and the teacher. Class time will be scheduled for each student to receive individual coaching, encouragement, and assistance in the stages of the writing process. The writing becomes homework when it is expected to be at a certain stage for the next class. Since somany students need additional time for help, I am available after school. Students are encouraged to contact me in advance for a convenient time. It is my pleasure to help students attain a high level of writing proficiency / success, and I look forward to working with you this semester.

The instructor may be contacted at the high school 468-2541 ext. 3024. Parents will be contacted by phone when academic or behavioral concerns arise. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you in advance for your interest and support. Please encourage your son / daughter to share his / her writing with you at the different stages. Their writing will be fresh, new, and perhaps the new wave of the future in CREATIVE WRITING.