

Creative Writing

Mrs. Maryjo Williams – Room A213

“One of the most valuable things we can do to heal one another is listen to each other’s stories.” ----- Rebecca Falls

Course Description

This course introduces students to the art of creative writing. Students will be writing original poetry, fiction and creative nonfiction. Students will read the work of professional writers and apply the principles of imaginative writing to their own work. Students will also conduct research, which will be used to enhance their writing and create a final portfolio to be presented at the end of the semester. Successful completion of this course will satisfy the writing component for graduation.

Iowa Core Standards

Writing Standards

W.11-12.1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W.11-12.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

W.11-12.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

W.11-12.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.11-12.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience

W.11-12.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

W.11-12.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

W.11-12.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

W.11-12.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes.

Speaking and Listening Standards

SL.11-12.2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

SL.11-12.3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

SL.11-12.4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

SL. 11-12. 6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 11-12 Languages standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations).

SL 11-12 IA.5 Prepare and conduct interviews.

SL 11-12 IA. 7 Debate an issue from either side.

Assessments

- Class discussion
- Argumentative writing assignments
- Analysis writing assignments
- Self-reflection writing assignments
- Final writing pieces – fiction, nonfiction, poetry
- Unit genre exams
- Workshop participation
- Final portfolio
- Semester exam
- Journal writing
- Self-selected reading of published writing

Course Emphasis

The primary emphasis of Creative Writing is to connect thinking creatively with writing. This course offers an assortment of stimuli for students whose abilities vary. Class activities include the study of literary selections by recognized artists, the writing and revision of student papers, and constructive evaluation by the teacher and the classmates. Through the workshop process, emphasis is placed on individualizing instruction and providing opportunities for in-class writing.

Instructional Strategies:

- ✓ Peer workshoping via individual, small group, and large group will be utilized.
- ✓ Students will write in their journals on a daily basis. These entries may be used as a springboard for daily assignments.
- ✓ Students are required to keep *all* drafts writings in a portfolio.
- ✓ All drafts and final writings should be saved electronically and be accessible between school and home.
- ✓ Students are expected to participate in class discussions as well as in writing conferences.
- ✓ Classroom discussion/Socratic Circles
- ✓ Using mentor texts for research and application to our own writing.

During the course, the student will be expected to meet these targets:

Develop critical reading and writing skills.
Practice active reading and rereading for the purpose of creative writing.
Analyze student and/or published texts for application to creative writing.
Interpret student and/or published texts for application to creative writing.
Identify the elements of poetry.
Distinguish the elements of form.
Specify the elements of contents.
Apply the elements of poetry to the composition of poetry.
Identify the elements of fiction.
Distinguish the elements of form.
Specify the elements of content.
Apply the elements of fiction to the composition of fiction.
Apply concepts and/or techniques from other student and/or professional writers to the composition of poetry.
Select appropriate concepts and/or techniques for writing poetry.
Adapt appropriate concepts and/or techniques for writing poetry.
Compose new poetic text.
Apply concepts and/or techniques from other students and/or professional writers to the composition of fiction.
Select appropriate concepts and/or techniques for writing fiction.
Adapt appropriate concepts and/or techniques for writing fiction.
Compose new fiction text.
Evaluate one's own individual writing process to allow flexibility in writing poetry and fiction.
Select appropriate early draft strategies.
Demonstrate an understanding of the complex meanings of revision.
Practice appropriate revision strategies to drafts of poetry and fiction.
Appraise individual texts for appropriate editing.
Demonstrate an understanding of a wide range of poetry and fiction.
Value a wide range of poetry.
Value a wide range of fiction.
Develop an appreciation for the importance of creative writing in culture.
Acknowledge the importance of poetry.
Acknowledge the importance of fiction.
Acknowledge the importance of other literary forms.

Required Reading

Teacher-prepared course information – print and electronic

On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft

Stephen King

A Few of the Classroom Resources

Room to Write

B. Goldberg

Writing and Selling Your Memoir

P. Balzer

Bird by Bird

A. Lamott

The Call of the Writer's Craft

T. Bird

Dialogue

G. Kempton

The Writing Thief

R. Culham

Classroom Resources Continued

Crafting a Life in Essay, Story and Poem

Writing the Memoir

Tell it Slant

D. Murray

J. Barrington

B. Miller/S. Paola

Classroom Expectations

1. Respect yourself, respect others, and respect your surroundings.
2. Confidentiality is a must within a creative writing class. What is written and shared in this classroom must stay in this classroom.
3. Students are required to be present and on time for class sessions. Cutting classes is inexcusable; being justifiably absent is a different matter. It is the responsibility of each student to attend class regularly and to share in the discussions. Senior High School, as well as myself, expects this.
4. Written assignments will be expected on the specified day unless a student is justifiably absent or can justify his/her reasons for presenting an assignment late. All written assignments and drafts must be typed. Any assignments that are handed in late will result in a grade reduction.
5. You are responsible for your own learning and success. I will not chase you down to complete assignments in the event you are absent from class. It is up to you to check my website regularly and contact me with any questions you may have regarding assignments and your grade. All due dates are posted on the creative writing page of my website.

Grading Scale

A	93%-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62

Mrs. Williams' Schedule

1	– English 1-2
2	- English 1-2
3	- English 1-2
4	- Team
5	– Creative Writing
6	– English 1-2
7	– Prep

Plagiarism or dishonesty on any assignment will result in a zero.

Communication

- E-mail: mwilliams@dbqschools.org
- Phone: 552-5500 Ext. 5567
- Website: <https://maryjowilliams.shutterfly.com>
- Available for help: before or after school, by appointment, during prep time

“The difference between the right word and the almost-right word is the difference between lightening and the lightening bug.”
Mark Twain

**“Only when you sit down to write, do you discover what you want to say.
You never know when you are going to arrive.”
Paul Muldoon**

A Note From Your Teacher

Much of the writing you have done up to this point in your career may not have been especially creative - Research papers, lab reports, five paragraph compositions – all follow basic formats from which there is usually little variation.

This class gives you the opportunity to explore different methods and formats. It is assumed that as juniors and seniors you have had enough writing assignments to have provided you with basic skills: introductions, organization, conclusions, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and so forth.

The next step is to use your imagination – and sometimes that takes practice. The journal writing should give you an almost unlimited supply of ideas about which to write. But creativity also means experimenting, not writing the same kinds of things over and over just because that is all you are interested in or because you always get good grades.

You should be writing every day - the exercise will be good for you. Some of what you write you will like, want to keep, and to polish. Other pieces you may deem not worthy of your time. Even good writers can write bad works.

Keep everything that you write, especially an electronic copy! A portfolio will be handed in at the end of the semester.

While some of you may be able to work while talking, most can't. I expect, when given time to write, you will do so with respect to others in the room. If you are finished, work on other writing assignments or look at the reading materials around the room (which may give you future ideas about which to write).

All papers must have their hand-written copies and all typed drafts attached! This class is all about the writing process, and it's important that you can show your growth as a writer.

Seniors, if you need the class to graduate, don't assume that you can't fail. Don't do the work, or don't work up the class standards, and the credit is not yours. Minimum effort is not rewarded (especially as graduation approaches).

I truly believe there is a writer in every one of us, and my hope is that you find the writer within. Open your mind and your heart and dive right in. I am your guide, so don't hesitate to take my hand and join me on this writing journey!

Mrs. Williams