

Creative Writing Overview

This elective one-trimester course is designed for students who desire to be creative writers and want the time and opportunity to express themselves. Students, however, also need to learn the fundamentals of their craft – of writing poetry and prose. This course is designed to give students time to write and to teach them some of those fundamentals. Students will study topics including plot, imagery, mood, skit-writing, short story writing, and more. Students will also be expected and encouraged to re-write and refine their writings. Brainstorming, developing sentence variety, and exposure to various famous authors will also occur.

Units of Study

1. **Unit 1 Title:** Let's Get Personal – Student writing will be focused on their own lives for inspiration. A main focus will be on creating imagery in writing.

Length of Unit: 3 weeks

2. **Unit 2 Title: The Plot Thickens**-Student writing will be focused on developing ideas for short stories. We will look at elements of plot, motivation, etc.

Length of Unit: 3 weeks

3. **Unit 3 Title: Let's Get Serious** –Student writing will focus on genres appropriate for serious subject matter, including ballads, villanelles, more with short stories, etc.

Length of Unit: 3 weeks

4. **Unit 4 Title: Lighten Up!** –Student writing will focus on genres appropriate for humorous subject matter, including satire, parodies, and more. Students will also be exposed to various examples of satire.

<u>Unit Summary:</u>	
This unit has students explore various types of poetry and prose, focusing on writing introspective and thoughtful pieces, including narratives or memoirs and poetry. Students will look at devices that strengthen poetry, including imagery and diction, and will study such writers as Emily Dickinson, William Carlos Williams, Sylvia Plath, and Robert Frost for examples of imagery, diction, and more. After exploring these different poets and strategies, students will be asked to write some of their own poetry. Students will also be asked to examine their own lives and write about an experience or multiple experiences in a personal narrative or memoir. This unit will consist of mini-lessons regarding various genres of writing. Students will also brainstorm, write in journals, and discuss ideas on a daily basis.	
<u>Title of Unit:</u> Keep It Personal	<u>Subject:</u> Creative Writing
<u>Common Core State Standards</u>	

R.L. 3 – Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (setting, order of action, development of characters)

R.L. 4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

R.L. 5 – Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

R.L.6 – Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant.

Writing standards- These standards will be addressed as students write their own pieces and follow the writing process to bring their works to completion.

W.3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance; establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.

b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone or outcome.

d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved in the course of the narrative.

W.4 – Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.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 specific purpose and audience.

W.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.

Concepts/topics to be covered in this unit:

- Imagery – What is it? How do writers achieve strong imagery? What poets have good examples of concrete imagery? (William Carlos Williams)
- Free Verse – Define it, show examples of it (Sylvia Plath)
- Narrative verse – Define it, show examples of it
 - Rhyme and meter
- Diction – Define it; have examples of Emily Dickinson’s poetry and have students pick out words whose meaning, if

Other resources:

- Various copies of different poems
- Poetry book for definitions/explanations of terms
- Journals for free-writing, brainstorming, etc.
- creativewritingprompts.com
- Excerpts from *The Glass Castle*

<p>changed, would change the meaning of the poem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memoir/personal narratives- share examples from <i>The Glass Castle</i> and have students react to it <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have students free write about their lives – 20 minutes one day in class • Describing an event – look at the who, what, where, when, why, and how <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organization of details and use of transitions 	
<p><u>Essential Questions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What qualities make a good creative writer? 2. How does my personal life impact my writing? 3. Why should we study examples of famous poets and authors in order to understand what being a good writer means? 4. How do imagery and diction impact poetry and prose? 5. What events in my own life are worth writing about? 	<p><u>Enduring Understandings</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our lives can, and perhaps should, influence our creativity. 2. Specific word choices purposefully impact the meaning in a piece of writing. 3. All good writing requires brainstorming of some kind. 4. All good writing requires revision. 5. Peers should be supportive and helpful in all aspects of the writing process.
<p>Key knowledge and essential skills acquired as a result of the unit...</p> <p><u>The Student Will Know...</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The definition of imagery and diction • How free verse differs from other types of poetry • The questions to answer when describing an event, a character, etc. • That their experiences impact their creativity and writing • What a memoir is 	<p>Key knowledge and essential skills acquired as a result of the unit...</p> <p><u>The Student Will Be Able To...</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write their own memoir • Analyze poems for imagery and incorporate into their own • Choose the best possible word for their poems • Write a narrative verse and free verse poems • Use the writing process to continually evaluate and improve their creative writing pieces • Write a poem in the style of one of the poets whose work we examined
<p><u>Formative/On-Going Assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily discussions • Exit and entrance slips • Journal writing and brainstorming each day • Group work and discussions • Peer revisions • Imagery and diction exercises/questions • Poetry analysis 	<p><u>Summative Assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Free verse poetry ○ Narrative verse poetry ○ Memoir/personal narrative ○ Imitation poem

<u>Instructional strategies to be used</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher-led “think alouds” with the poems we read as examples • Studying examples of good memoirs and introspective poetry • Discussion – whole class and group • Some lecture and note in the mini-lessons • Modeling of writing free verse, narrative verse, and memoir • Mini “field trips” through the school and outside, weather permitting, to look for examples of imagery 	
<u>Academic Vocabulary</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. imagery 2. diction 3. rhyme 4. meter 5. narrative verse 6. free verse 7. memoir 8. organization 9. transitions 	

<u>Unit Summary:</u> This unit focuses on different aspects of short stories, novels, and plays - specifically the elements of plot, conflict, characterization, motivation, and dialogue. Students will read a variety of short stories, analyzing character, plot elements, themes, and conflict in order to understand how to incorporate those elements into their own stories.	
<u>Title of Unit:</u> The Plot Thickens	<u>Subject:</u> Creative Writing
<u>Common Core State Standards</u> R.L. 3 –Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (setting, order of action, development of characters) R.L. 4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and one, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. R.L. 5 – Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact. R.L.6 – Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant. Writing standards- These standards will be addressed as students write their own pieces and follow the writing process to bring their works to completion. W.3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective	

technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance; establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.

b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone or outcome.

d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved in the course of the narrative.

W.4 – Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.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 specific purpose and audience.

W.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.

Concepts/topics to be covered in this unit:

- Plot elements
- Conflict
- Theme/purpose
- Motivation
- Characterization
- Dialogue
- Mood/atmosphere
- Point of view

Other resources:

- Copies of various short stories, including “The Black Cat” by Poe, “Desiree’s Baby” by Kate Chopin, “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” by Ambrose Bierce, and others.
- Journals for free-writing and brainstorming

Essential Questions

1. What makes a short story or novel interesting to read?
2. How do conflicts drive a story?
3. How can you use dialogue to impact your story?
4. Why is the use of internal conflicts sometimes more powerful than using external conflicts?
5. Why would an author, in this case you, include theme(s) in his or her story?
6. What methods can you use to create the correct mood or atmosphere for your story?
7. How does point of view affect your story?

Enduring Understandings

1. Writing creatively requires time and effort; stories don’t necessarily fall into place but require revision.
2. Good stories usually contain both internal and external conflicts.
3. Reading stories with good use of plot, conflict, and characterization will help writers understand how to incorporate those elements into their own stories.
4. Good writers consider a character’s motivation and the different methods of developing a character’s personality, including point of view.
5. Brainstorming and revision are a necessary part of the creative writing process.

Key knowledge and essential skills acquired as a result of

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<p>the unit...</p> <p><u>The Student Will Know...</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions and examples of conflict, motivation, point-of-view, setting • The different elements of plot • The methods of characterization • How to incorporate dialogue into their own writing • The different techniques for creating mood/atmosphere 	<p>the unit...</p> <p><u>The Student Will Be Able To...</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize the aspects of fiction we discussed into their own short stories • Recognize the aspects of fiction we discussed in other short stories • Create a specific type of mood/atmosphere in their short stories • Determine which point of view is most effective for their short stories and then use that narrative technique • Establish a theme or purpose in their short stories
<p><u>Formative/On-Going Assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily discussion of ideas • Group work – presenting the short stories and aspects of plot • Journal prompts for brainstorming, free-writing, etc. • Questions and annotations for readings relating to elements of plot, etc. • Pair-shares for short story rough drafts • Self-character sketch 	<p><u>Summative Assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short story that shows an awareness of the topics we covered (at least one) • A character sketch focusing on the methods of characterization
<p><u>Instructional strategies to be used</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class discussion – whole class, small group • Lecture and notes • Guided reading over any informative reading • Draft work – writing is a process, so students will be asked to re-visit various pieces they have written 	
<p><u>Academic Vocabulary</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Plot <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Exposition Rising action Climax Falling action Resolution/denouement Conflict Setting Point-of-view Motivation Characterization Theme Dialogue 	

9. Mood/atmosphere	
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Unit Summary:

In this unit, students will explore more serious topics and themes for creative writing, such as disillusionment, war, politics, death, and other subject matters. Students will utilize what they have already learned about poetry and short story writing, writing both poems and at least one short story about more serious subjects. We will study additional poetry forms, such as the villanelle, and additional poetic devices, including similes, metaphors, personification, etc. Finally, we will also discuss and look at small portions of drama/skits that deal with serious subject matter, and students may have an opportunity to write a skit as well. Students will learn what is necessary to include when writing a play, including stage directions and setting the scene.

Title of Unit:

Let's Get Serious

Subject:

Creative Writing

Common Core State Standards

R.L. 3 – Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (setting, order of action, development of characters)

R.L. 4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and one, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.

R.L. 5 – Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

R.L.6 – Analyze a case in which grasping point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant.

Writing standards- These standards will be addressed as students write their own pieces and follow the writing process to bring their works to completion.

W.3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance; establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.

b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone or outcome.

d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved in the course of the narrative.

W.4 – Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.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 specific purpose and audience.

W.6 – Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual r shared

writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

Concepts/topics to be covered in this unit:

- Dramas/skits/Tragedy
 - Stage directions
 - Setting the scene
 - Writing dialogue
 - Revisit characterization
- Review of themes and motifs
 - Focus on disillusionment and consider how the students may write a story around that idea
- Samples of poetry about war, death, loss of something, etc.
 - Questions and discussion
- Poetic devices
 - Metaphor
 - Simile
 - Personification
 - Symbol
- Villanelle

Other resources:

- Copies of poems by Wilfred Owen, Thomas Hardy, Emily Dickinson, and more (to demonstrate serious subject matter)
- Video clips from Tennessee Williams' or Arthur Miller's plays to show tragedy/death/drama in plays.
- The copies of short stories (Poe, etc) students already have from the plot unit; they will revisit these to understand how authors deal with serious themes and subject matter

Essential Questions

1. Why should you be able to write about serious topics in creative forms?
2. How can writing creatively about serious issues benefit both the writer and the reader?
3. What types of conflict among/within characters contribute to serious subject matter and why?
4. Why is indirect characterization so important in plays?
5. What poetic devices help your poems achieve their seriousness of theme/purpose?

Enduring Understandings

1. Poems, short stories, and plays are genres that allow writers to deal with serious subject matter.
2. Serious subject matter needs to be addressed in creative form because fiction and poetry can help people deal with and express concern about certain problems.
3. All choices writers make need to work toward their ultimate purpose or theme, including how to characterize a character, what conflicts to use, and more.
4. Writing requires brainstorming, revising, and peer support.

Key knowledge and essential skills acquired as a result of the unit...

The Student Will Know...

- Definitions and examples of villanelle, simile, metaphor, personification
- How different genres deal with serious topics
- The importance of stage directions, setting scenes, and dialogue to a play or drama
- How to brainstorm serious subjects

Key knowledge and essential skills acquired as a result of the unit...

The Student Will Be Able To...

- Utilize the aspects of fiction we discussed into their own serious short stories
- Write a skit/mini-play about a serious topic, such as war
- Write a number of poems dealing with serious subject matter, incorporating various poetic devices to strengthen their purpose

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a villanelle • Establish a theme or purpose for their pieces
<u>Formative/On-Going Assessments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily discussion of ideas – this will be especially important in developing and “fleshing out” ideas students have for their stories, poems, and skits. • Group work – brainstorming ideas and performing skits, if time • Journal prompts for brainstorming, free-writing, etc. • Questions and annotations for readings relating to the unit • Pair-shares for short story, poem, and play rough drafts • 	<u>Summative Assessments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short story that shows an awareness of the topics we covered • A villanelle about a solemn occasion, similar to Dylan Thomas’s “Do not go gently into that good night” • A mini-play/skit following the rubric and guidelines provided (should be a tragedy if possible) • At least two-three poems following the rubric and guidelines provided
<u>Instructional strategies to be used</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class discussion – whole class, small group • Lecture and notes • Guided reading over any informative reading • Draft work – writing is a process, so students will be asked to re-visit various pieces they have written • Entrance and exit slips to “check” where students are and to move along the creative conversation 	
<u>Academic Vocabulary</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disillusionment 2. Simile 3. Metaphor 4. Personification 5. Symbol 6. Tragedy 	

Unit Summary:

This unit explores various genres of humorous prose, such as satire, parody, and comedy of manners, as well as some humorous poetry. Students will examine examples of these genres of writing and then write their own. Part of the objective of this unit is to help students see that even humorous writing has a purpose, whether it is to entertain, inform, or persuade, and that their creative pieces need to have a purpose as well.

Title of Unit:

Lighten Up!

Subject:

Creative Writing

Common Core State Standards

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b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole and build toward a particular tone or outcome.

d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

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W.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.

Concepts/topics to be covered in this unit:

- Humor-what is meant by being funny? We will look at various media examples, including

Other resources:

- Examples of satire in writing
- Excerpts from Saturday Night Live and/or *The*

<p>writing, television, and film.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satire – We will look at written and broadcast examples (Colbert Report) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exaggeration/hyperbole ○ Understatement ○ Logical, ethical, emotional appeals ○ Purpose • Parody – what is it? We will examine examples in songs, poetry, and in other forms of media (SNL) • Humorous poems – We will study at legitimate poets who have humorous poems and look at them for content and detail • Comedy of manners – what is meant by this; how is this similar to and different from satire? 	<p><i>Colbert Report</i> for other forms of satire and parody</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Song lyrics by Weird Al for parody • Copies of various humorous poems • Journals for free-writing, brainstorming, etc.
<p><u>Essential Questions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the purpose of satire and what techniques help achieve that purpose? 2. How does humor help the purpose of parody or satire? 3. Why is it harder to include humor in writing that serious content? 4. How can you help yourself in creating humor in your writing? 5. What techniques make humorous poems effective? 	<p><u>Enduring Understandings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humor, especially satire, is an effective way to make a point. • Sometimes the only purpose of a piece of writing is to entertain. • Humor is difficult to write, but it is worthwhile. • All good writing requires brainstorming and revision. • Peers should be supportive and helpful in the writing process.
<p>Key knowledge and essential skills acquired as a result of the unit...</p> <p><u>The Student Will Know...</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The definition of satire and parody ○ The rhetorical devices used for writing satire – exaggeration, appeals, etc. ○ How humor is important for establishing an author's (the student's) purpose, even in short stories and poems ○ That humor is often harder to incorporate into their writing than serious or tragic subject matter 	<p>Key knowledge and essential skills acquired as a result of the unit...</p> <p><u>The Student Will Be Able To...</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a piece of purposeful satire about a contemporary issue • Write a parody of a song, a person who is famous, or of a person they know (with permission) • Perform/share their parody with their classmates • Explain the similarities and differences between satire and comedy of manners • Write at least one short story and at least two-three poems containing examples of humor.
<p><u>Formative/On-Going Assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily discussions about examples of literature with humor • Exit and entrance slips • Journal prompts 	<p><u>Summative Assessments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humorous short story • A satirical piece, either a story or an essay • A parody of a song, person (famous or with permission), work

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming and discussing • Group work, discussions about ideas for short stories, and presentations • In-class writing time • Questions over the samples of satire, parody, etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humorous poems
<u>Instructional strategies to be used</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher-led “think alouds” with the samples we read • Discussion – whole class and group • Some lecture and note with mini-lessons • Modeling of revision process (of old and current works) • Class-led brainstorming for topics for satire • Questions over the samples 	
<u>Academic Vocabulary</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. satire 2. parody 3. comedy of manners 4. humor 5. wit 	